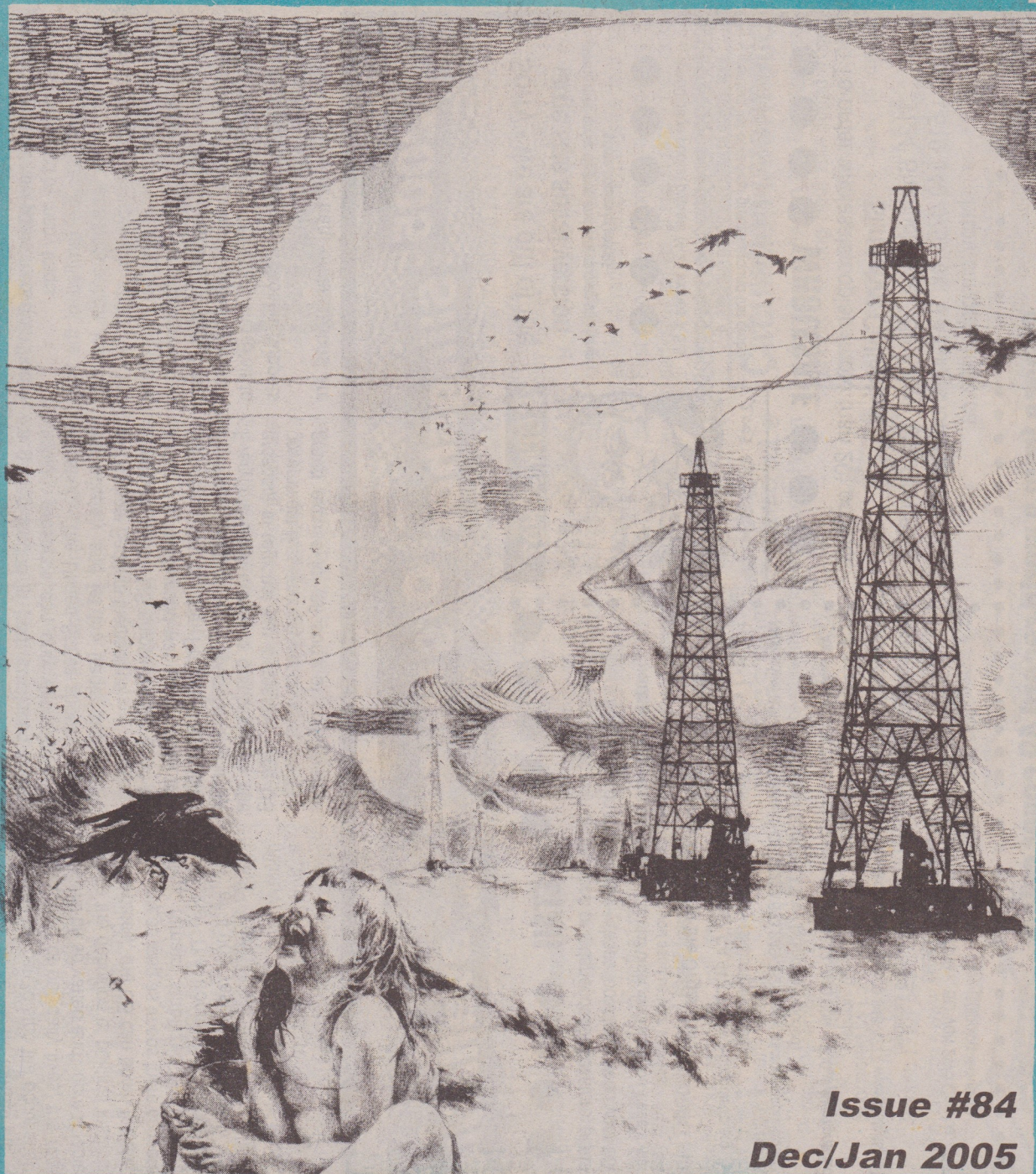


# SLINGSHOT

Free



**Issue #84**

**Dec/Jan 2005**



# SLINGSHOT

## Between Iraq and A Hard Place

by x wingnut

The US is not in control of Iraq, thanks to overwhelming resistance. Contrary to US claims, the insurgency is primarily Iraqi, enjoys wide societal support, spans religious and ethnic lines, and is only growing stronger. As Iraqis struggle to make ending the occupation a key issue in the upcoming elections, people wonder if the elections will actually resemble anything mildly democratic. Iraq is one mess the US made but cannot clean up; the US is the mess.

The US may be winning battles, but it is losing the war. Every time the US destroys a city — the mosques, random homes, hospitals — more resistance fighters stand up. With the hearts and minds battle lost long ago, US strategists want overstretched US troops to continue random carnage and destruction in search of "terrorists." But it's the US commanders who are committing the war crimes. The ruling class interests fueling the war — the desire to control not only the oil reserves but also the Chinese and European economies dependent on the same stock — won't give up. The US strategy for control works only when everybody's playing the same

game, imperial capitalism. The Iraqi people aren't playing this game; they're not being proper pawns. In fact, they're shoving Improvised Explosive Devices up the butts of the US. The US strategy is failing.

Who is this resistance? An inventory of groups from Sept. 19, 2004 published in the Baghdad paper *Al Zawra* lists three main Sunni coalitions, two Shi'ite militias, and nine groups tactically based on kidnappings. Four of the latter are specifically associated with Al-Qaeda, like Zarqawi's cell which has become the recent terrorist darling of the US media. The kidnappers do not enjoy as much popular support as the other groups: "Without a shred of evidence, Bush, Blair, and [Iraqi president] Iyad Allawi's quisling regime shamelessly declare that they are only pursuing the Jordanian kidnapper Zarqawi and other 'foreign terrorists,'" writes Sami Ramadani in the Saudi Arabia-based *Arab News*. "The people of Falluja, their leaders, negotiators

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Although the US media repeatedly has said the resistance is the work of Saddam's Ba'ath party, sources differ on the strength of these ties. Several of the smaller Sunni factions are opposed to Saddam, while groups that are explicitly Ba'athist reportedly are involved in supplying weapons and financing the operations, rather than actual fighting. Sunni groups tend to use offensive, guerrilla warfare tactics of attacking when the enemy is weak and then slipping away. Sunni Muslims, who comprise 20% of the Iraqi population but were in power with Saddam, may lose significant influence if an elected government reflects the 60% Shi'ite majority.

The main arm of Shi'ite resistance is young

**Continued on page 11**



**The US strategy is failing.**



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## Let's Get Freaky

### a call for diversionary tactics

By P. Wingnut

In the wake of the election, wingnuts — already teetering on the fringes of reality — have got our work cut out for us. If in fact we now face the prospect of a Christian fundamentalist assault on abortion, gays, birth control — probably alcohol, drugs and porn, too, if they get a chance — then it's high time to begin a counter-offensive — the best defense is a good offense!

Folks on the extreme fringes have a crucial role right now — which is to be on the extreme fringe and keep the political spectrum as wide

polyamorous sexual chaos represent an even greater threat?

If you want equal rights for gays to be "normal" people, then the offensive strategy is to fight for the freaks. If you want to stay on the defensive, then do what the moderates do — pull gay marriage off the table because it might offend the Christian right, and see if you can work on subtle changes to the tax code or whatever to provide more space for folks in civil unions.

The same theory works for most issues —

# The A in Family





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Continued on page 11

# The A in Family

by molly coddle

In order to create a bridge between self-determining individuals and community, people need family. Whomever it's comprised of; whether the ties are blood or choice, we are shaped and supported throughout our whole lives by *family*.

I struggle with the family aspect of being an anarchist precisely because most of my family are not radicals. The people who would bail me out of jail or visit me everyday in the hospital or cook me dinner if I had a baby don't understand anti-capitalist libertarianism. But I love them, and must somehow bridge myself into my community with this "foreign" family.

How do I do this? I find more people within my community to take on those roles. I put more of myself into my affinity groups than just the work that needs to be done. I double up on role models, so that I have my grandfather of blood and my grandfather of radical faerie empowerment.

A century ago in the States, family was several generations thick, several degrees of cousins wide and capable of adopting orphans, "godchildren" and unmarried friends. With the rise of industrial labor, families changed as they moved to find work. Developers created single family housing for the masses, and the

suburbs were born. From the fifties onward, media and the economy have impressed that the fam is just ma, pa, your siblings and the dog. Moral conservatives who fight for a return to "family values" are responding to this degeneration of support networks. They just offer alternatives unpalatable to many queer, open or radical people.

Anarchist family, for me, is the multigenerational network of people who support, teach, challenge, love, encourage, rely on and accompany us through parts or all of our lives. We make a family of our hearts when our blood kin--by death, distance or dysfunction--can't be with us. In short, who would you cry with?

I have heard people lament over the imbalance of generations within anarchism, within every scene. People note that we lack a



# Let's Get Freaky

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In the wake of the election, wingnuts – already teetering on the fringes of reality – have got our work cut out for us. If in fact we now face the prospect of a Christian fundamentalist assault on abortion, gays, birth control – probably alcohol, drugs and porn, too, if they get a chance – then it's high time to begin a counter-offensive – the best defense is a good offense!

Folks on the extreme fringes have a crucial role right now – which is to be on the extreme fringe and keep the political spectrum as wide as possible. The right-wing would like to move the debate ever further to the right – so that fringe issues and in fact fringe reality doesn't even exist. If this happens, what are now the moderate issues could become the far-out end of the political continuum.

For example, Bush is believed to have used the *gay marriage* issue to help him win the election. We have to keep in mind that gay marriage is essentially an attempt by the more mainstream wing of the gay movement to assimilate into the mainstream – to be entitled to everything "normal" people are entitled to. That is cool and a worthy goal – but on the fringes, we have to recognize that winning gay marriage isn't the radical forefront – having polyamorous, gender traitorous orgies in the streets is more like it. Right now, mainstream civil rights groups are talking about how they're going to avoid pressing demands for gay marriage for the moment, because the movement for gay marriage is creating a perfect wedge issue. That is a calculation by responsible folks – many of whom have "activist" jobs with non-profits. Out on the fringes, reality looks a little different – those Christians would be *begging* gays to have nice, monogamous, suburban lives if they realized the alternative options for queer chaos. If gay marriage is a threat to het marriage, doesn't

polyamorous sexual chaos represent an even greater threat?

If you want equal rights for gays to be "normal" people, then the offensive strategy is to fight for the freaks. If you want to stay on the defensive, then do what the moderates do – pull gay marriage off the table because it might offend the Christian right, and see if you can work on subtle changes to the tax code or whatever to provide more space for folks in civil unions.

The same theory works for most issues – Earth First! or the Earth Liberation Front define the fringes of the environmental movement while the Sierra Club engineers sensible compromises that usually leave the earth worse off. Playing defense is always

**We shouldn't stop protesting and resisting, of course, but couldn't we be a little less ritualistic?**

going to get us the crumbs. The Christian right didn't win the last election by playing defense – they fought for what they actually wanted. The fringe is always tiny and marginalized, and usually has influence far beyond its apparent marginalization. Those of us on the fringe have to remember that as millions of Kerry voters sink into a post-election depression – we have to avoid catching their negative energy.

Radicals in America have a lot to learn from the rebels in Iraq. When you're battling an empire, a lot of times it's not the best idea to launch a frontal assault on heavily armed troops. Instead, the guerrilla looks for weak spots, looks to distract the enemy from it's main goal, looks to move in the shadows until the crucial moment. Being a radical in America,

Continued on page 10



# SLINGSHOT

Slingshot is an independent, volunteer-run, more-often-than-quarterly radical newspaper published in the East Bay since 1988.

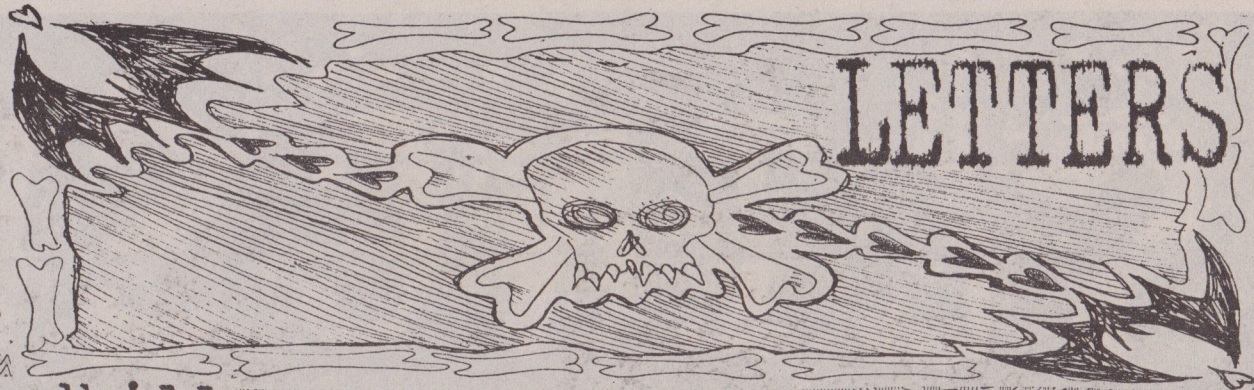
You'll notice that this issue is slightly shorter than usual — only 12 pages. *Slingshot* has been publishing more often (every two months) and our distribution keeps improving, but one critical deficiency has been good articles to publish. We get a lot of submissions, but almost all of them are rants, which isn't really what we're looking for. What we need is hard-hitting, well researched and carefully reasoned articles that address the critical political situation we're in. Between the war, the increasing tide of right-wing religious intolerance, prisons and the continuing environmental crisis, radical media like this paper are important. We want it to be as well written and relevant as possible. If you're thinking of writing something, the article "Media that inspires action" on this page contains a few ideas about the kind of articles we would like to see. Send something or call us.

A lot of heavy shit is going on in the world right now, and while we were creating this issue, some of us felt a kind of personal/political crisis because we couldn't seem to figure out how to publish the kind of powerful, radical response to these events that we had hoped for. So this is our best shot. Given all the death and destruction going on right now — not to mention Bush's reelection — you'll probably join us in finding this issue a bit fluffy. But we're happy that at least it isn't negative or depressing. And some of the articles, after a lot of editing and revisions, are turning out really great.

Part of the reason this issue felt like a crisis to some of us is that creating *Slingshot* is a cathartic personal and political process. When scary political stuff happens — the war in Iraq, 9-11, domestic political crackdown — it is easy to feel totally powerless. But then we remember "oh yeah, at least we have a paper so we can respond!"

By writing our *Slingshot* articles, we try to

Envelope art  
by Barbara L.



cover art  
by monica

## Roadkill ranger

Dear Slingshot:

I need to throw in an alternate response to the previous *Slingshot* article on road kill. I am a vegetarian and an animal lover and the idea that I could see a dead critter as my next pair of pants is too much. I have worked for years to buck myself up enough to remove sweet smashed and bloodied beings from the middle of the road, off the manmade surface — the death strip — back to the earth where they can decompose and go back into it, as the closed circle always does. It is hard but it's an opportunity to apologize to them for my part, to pay respect to their sweet bunny souls, and to save other critters. Very often other animals will be killed because they are smelling or eating the critter in the road. It's the very least I can do, being a human after all. But doing the very least just won't do! — Bunny lover

## Voicemail

A message on the *Slingshot* voicemail box...

hey who wrote the roadkill [inaudible - article?]  
The same people who drive the cars are the same people with eyeballs in their head that got their license because they're eyeballs work and they're the same people who are looking at the beast. You actually do computers and you don't do cars? What the fuck is wrong with you people?! [phone slammed down]

## Emergency contraception

Hi there Sling Shot folks,

I'm eagerly awaiting my very own copy of the 2005 *Slingshot* Organizer. A friend of mine got an organizer early, and showed me the section on Emergency Contraception. I was really excited to see that you included this information, since it is one of my personal favorite medical topics. I did notice that some of your information was debatable if not inaccurate, and I wanted to let you know.

In the section on the pharmaceutical forms of emergency contraception (EC), there were two things that I noted:

- You state that EC prevents implantation of a fertilized egg. Actually, we don't know exactly how EC works — it may prevent sperm from moving through the uterus to the tubes, it may prevent ovulation or fertilization directly, or it may prevent implantation. Some people take these distinctions very seriously — they make the difference between EC being an acceptable form of contraception, or an unacceptable form of early abortion. Because you only mention the prevention of implantation, some people may not use EC based on their political or religious beliefs.

- You state that anyone who has

contraindications to using oral contraceptives should not use EC. Actually, since EC is only used once, and does not expose a woman to long-term hormones, the ONLY generally accepted contraindication to using EC is current pregnancy.

- Finally, there is a great EC resource available, at "1-888-not2late" - people can learn of health care providers in their area who will prescribe EC.

Thanks again for including EC info in the *Slingshot* Organizer — it is really important information that can make a huge difference in people's lives. If you ever want/need a medical consultant or reviewer I'd be more than happy to help out. I am a family physician MD, newby herbalist and street medic. In solidarity, eowyn rieke

**Slingshot response:** We're grateful for the update on ways to get EC and when you can take it. We believe that all forms of safe birth control are acceptable and that only a woman (with her doctor) can decide what's right for her. All the ways EC may work prevent implantation, which is when an abortion becomes medically necessary. Thanks for your input!

# Media that inspires action

By PB Floyd

When you're running a project, it's good to re-think its purpose from time to time. The

active, but haven't yet made the step from critique to action. Folks who were active at one point, but who've become disengaged

the problem or phenomenon from a new angle or in a way that goes beyond "common wisdom" about the issue. Second, the article about



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By writing our *Slingshot* articles, we try to work through the political situation in our minds and regain our sense of courage and pragmatic optimism. We spell out our vision for a different world. While we can't always realize this vision right now, a lot of times putting it on paper makes it clear that we are living little pieces of that vision all the time without realizing it — that change is happening and that we're participating in the struggle everyday. We recognize that we're far from powerless and that we're not alone. We hope you'll join us in this process of searching, writing, inspiration and ultimately, action.

This issue marks the return of Spanish translation pages, which took a vacation last issue. A huge thanks to the numerous translators who made this possible on short notice and under stressful conditions. Including the Spanish translations is extremely challenging — we dream of having a more consistent and stable translation committee that could make the Spanish pages a routine part of our process, instead of a mini-crisis that gets repeated each issue.

As always, editorial decisions are made by the *Slingshot* collective, but not all the articles reflect the opinions of collective members. We welcome debate, constructive criticism and discussion.

### Slingshot New Volunteer Meeting

Volunteers interested in getting involved with *Slingshot* can come to the new volunteer meeting January 9 at 1 p.m. at the Long Haul in Berkeley (see below).

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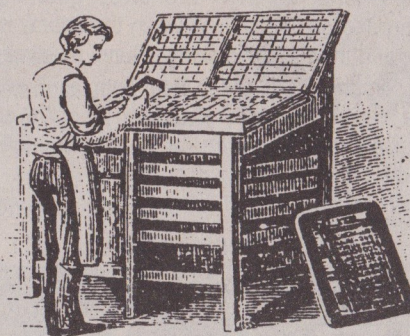
When you're running a project, it's good to re-think its purpose from time to time. The *Slingshot* collective spends a ton of time, energy and money to publish this paper every two months — there are already tons of folks publishing papers everywhere and lots of stuff to read on the internet — what is special about *Slingshot* that justifies all this work?

One big purpose of *Slingshot* is to go beyond just providing information and analysis about social issues and provide some inspiration. Every day the mainstream press is full of articles about problems. The alternative press is at its best when it goes beyond just talking about problems and instead points to solutions — areas available for struggle, the development of new and creative tactics, hopeful stories about people who are changing things. Let's face it — a lot of people know we're facing problems, but usually, this awareness just makes people feel hopeless and trapped — paralyzed. "Well, if the world situation is fucked, I may as well forget about it and enjoy myself while I still can." The most important thing alternative press can do is figure out how to move people from disempowerment and resignation to action!

In figuring out how to inspire and motivate, the alternative media needs to figure out who to talk to, how to talk to them, what to say and how to say it — what is the audience? *Slingshot* has no formal "party line" on these questions or any others, but generally, the most important audience is not people who are already inspired and motivated to act — it's folks who could potentially be sympathetic and

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active, but haven't yet made the step from critique to action. Folks who were active at one point, but who've become discouraged or withdrawn is another important audience. Politically, the most crucial audience are folks who are concerned about single issues or skeptical about the social direction, but who haven't developed ideas about answers — what could be done, what would a new society look like, how can people organize to create change? Radical media can point out connections between seemingly distinct issues



and social problems — a lot of problems and solutions come down to a critique of authority, hierarchy, power, dehumanizing structures, economic and technological systems. Folks who were raised as liberals — with some faith in the government and the system — but who are realizing the flaws in these systems should be a key audience for radical alternative media.

How to address an audience, what to say, and how to say it are crucial questions. For me, an ideal radical article contains four parts. First, it ought to contain an analysis of a particular aspect of social reality that looks at

the problem or phenomenon from a new angle or in a way that goes beyond "common wisdom" about the issue. Second, the article should suggest solutions, not just point out how fucked up things are. Third, the article should inspire folks to actually do something. Just understanding an issue and knowing a theoretical solution is not enough. Each of us has numerous opportunities during our lives to change, grow and struggle. A great article will connect solutions to these opportunities. Finally, the best articles have heart and are personal. Increasingly, this society is functioning like a huge computer in which each of our lives is harnessed to perform limited operations within the machine — going to work, consuming, reproducing, playing by the rules. We need media that goes beyond an academic, cold discourse and touches what is really human, precious and unique about each of our lives.

It is so disappointing when alternative media attempts to use the master's tools of rhetoric and style. We can never smash an inhuman system by conforming our lives, ideas, or language to its standards. The society we seek is one in which people do it ourselves — full of art and chaos. Media that is so computerized that you have to read it carefully to see that it is *talking* about revolution doesn't feel very revolutionary. Some activists want our media to look professional, clean and orderly, but a professional, clean orderly world is what we seek to smash. People feel inspired when they see a fully human, messy, chaotic world represented on paper. Alternative media at its best, and hopefully *Slingshot*, help provide such inspiration in these scary times.

Spring 2005  
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Crossword puzzle answers  
from issue #83



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Printed December 2, 2004

### Slingshot Newspaper

Sponsored by Long Haul

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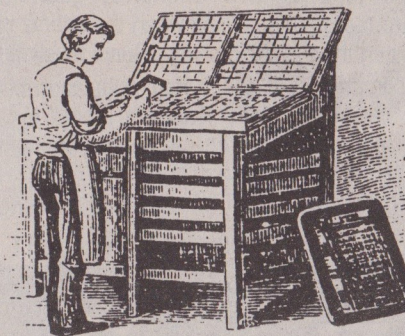


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### Issue # 85

New Volunteer meeting January 9

Deadline January 29

Out February 10



### Issue #86

New Volunteer meeting February 27

Deadline March 26

Out April 7

### Issue #87

New Volunteer meeting May 8

Deadline May 28

Out June 9



## Circulation Information

Slingshot is free in the Bay Area and is available at Long Haul and Bound Together Books (SF), plus lots of other places. Contact us or come by if you want to distribute Slingshot for free in the Bay Area.

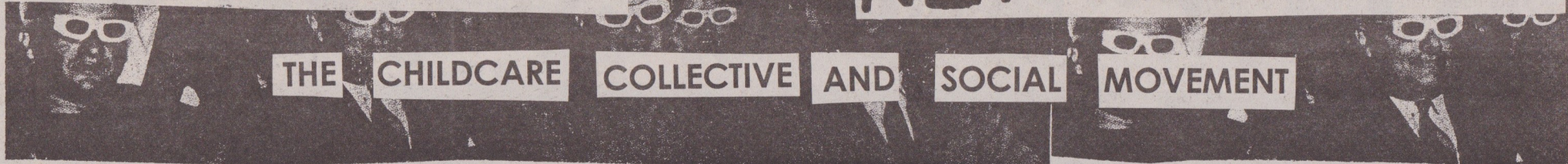
Subscriptions to Slingshot are free to prisoners, low income and anyone who owns a Slingshot organizer or \$1 per issue. International is \$2.50 per issue. Back issues are also available free or cheap. **Amazing national free distribution program:** Outside of the Bay Area, we'll mail a stack of free copies of Slingshot to distributors, infoshops, bookstores and random friendly individuals for FREE in the US if they give 'em out for free.

## Crossword puzzle answers from issue #83

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# CHILDREN OF A REVOLUTION



By paseo

If our children despise us, our movement will end.

I've been volunteering with the Childcare Collective for the past five months and every so often my phone rings or I get an e-mail saying, 'here are some childcare opportunities...' It's kind of like being a spy, "Your mission, should you choose to accept it..." I never know quite what to expect when I do a childcare gig, but I always look forward to that rewarding feeling I know will be there when I'm done. But, I've started to realize that there's a lot more going on than free, volunteer based childcare. I'm starting to understand the bigger picture. I've been doing childcare in some form on and off for the past six years. When I moved to the Bay Area I hoped to keep doing so; that's when I found the Childcare Collective. I thought, 'Great, here's a chance to keep working with kids.' I didn't think about the political aspect or how it might serve a social movement, which comes solely from the people. I just wanted to work with kids because I've always found it rewarding and fulfilling. But now, well, now I go to marches or rallies or events, and I see kids that I've worked with through the Collective. I say hi to them and they know my name. It feels like community; like I'm helping to build something strong.

In 2002, a group of folks, working in San Francisco with the Women's Collective of the San Francisco Day Labor Program, was inspired by the importance of quality childcare and the obvious lack thereof. Using the original model of the School of Unity and Liberation (SOUL)--a training program for aspiring

over forty hours a week chasing capital to support only the mere basics of what a family needs.

I grew up bouncing from one institution to another. Both my parents worked and so when I wasn't in day care I was in school and when I wasn't in school, I was in after-school care. Needless to say, like most children these days, I spent more time within childcare environments than I did within the home. Thus, the people who cared for me were as important of an influence in my formative years as the people who birthed me and shared my blood.

Though I have to say, there was no cohesion; there was no unifying ideology behind these various childcare providers that let me know there was meaning to what was going on. Don't get me wrong, I learned so much from the individuals who took on the challenging and

Collective steps up.

In their mission statement the Childcare Collective says firmly and with admirable conviction: "We are committed to providing grassroots organizations and movements composed of and led by immigrant women, low-income women, and women of color with trained, competent, patient and politicized childcare providers for one-time events or ongoing meetings." The idea is simple: prioritize the leadership of the oppressed and the underrepresented. Support them in building movements that only they can lead by offering up one of the most basic necessities that would otherwise keep them from their all too important community building and organizing.

Here's how it works: An organization like POWER (People Organized to Win Employment Rights) or the Women's Collective

doing. We hope to help children situate themselves as valuable and important members of a community and a movement." Whoa, imagine that! A bunch of politicized volunteers helping to build multi-generational communities and movements. And I've really started to see it. I see inspiring, organized women of color doing important work and I get to interact with their strong and independent children. And I wonder what these children will get out of our interactions. I dream about them taking

...these people  
have found a place  
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in people of color  
led movements.



up their parents' struggles or their own and moving forward. And I'm grateful that I played a role, however small, in their and the movement's development. There have been times when one of the kids I'm working with will start to feel a little antsy, they'll say, "When's my mom gonna come? I want to go home." And even though these words are always a little painful for a childcare provider to hear, I cherish the opportunity to say, "I know you want to go home, but your mom is helping to make all of our lives a little bit better, it takes time. Here let's play a game."

There's a lot of work to be done but the Childcare Collective is up to the challenge. They are trying to establish a stronger presence in the East Bay. They have recently



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In 2002, a group of folks, working in San Francisco with the Women's Collective of the San Francisco Day Labor Program, was inspired by the importance of quality childcare and the obvious lack thereof. Using the original model of the School of Unity and Liberation (SOUL)--a training program for aspiring organizers and activists--they came together to form the Childcare Collective in the Bay Area. The vision was to provide free, conscientious, and stable childcare to those who need it the most. But who exactly is that? The obvious answer is, of course, parents. But in today's oppressive regime, there are so many

There's little room to value the family when we have to spend well over forty hours a week chasing capital to support only the mere basics of what a family needs.

parents who need childcare but simply can't afford it. While I firmly believe that children grow and flourish the best within a community of involved participants, it would be wonderful if every parent could personally provide for all of their children's needs—from food, to education, to emotional support. It's an ideal world where parents are allowed to raise their

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inspiring task of caring for children, things I wouldn't have learned at home or from my family. I gained different perspectives and unfamiliar knowledge. If I had been left solely to my parents' devices, I would probably be wearing a suit everyday and working in a small box, staring at a computer screen. But, what they were never able to give me was that all too important sense of continuity and belonging. That enriching sense of community.

I can't imagine what life for a single, non-white, low income, non-english speaking mother is like in this country. And I certainly don't

or Critical Resistance (an anti-prison organization)—groups that deal with, are led by, and are comprised of immigrant women, low-income women and women of color—has regular meetings and/or events. These organizations usually have an Event Coordinator who contacts the Childcare Collective's Core Committee. "The Core" as it is affectionately called, is a group within the collective that takes on the administrative responsibilities of fund-raising, recruiting, scheduling, etc.. To be on the Core one must first be a volunteer and complete the

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There's a lot of work to be done but the Childcare Collective is up to the challenge. They are trying to establish a stronger presence in the East Bay. They have recently started to help out with the Mandela Arts Center and Critical Resistance—both in Oakland. However, new and dedicated volunteers are a must! To become a Collective member, a volunteer must agree to:

- perform childcare at least once each month
- keep the Collective supplied with your current contact information
- return ALL phone calls to the Collective
- attend one orientation
- attend quarterly volunteer in-services and trainings

But the first and most important step is to contact the Collective. If you are interested in volunteering or your organization is in need of childcare, please call the Childcare Collective at 415.541.5039 or e-mail them at [childcarecollective@lycos.com](mailto:childcarecollective@lycos.com)

"The Childcare Collective hopes to play a part in building a movement that recognizes and prioritizes the voices and political agendas of women and mothers, especially women of color, low-income women, and immigrants. The needs of parents have traditionally not been recognized and parents' access to quality childcare is sporadic at best." The important thing to remember is that the Childcare Collective is not the movement. For the most



conscientious, and stable childcare to those who need it the most. But who exactly is that? The obvious answer is, of course, parents. But in today's oppressive regime, there are so many

There's little room to value the family when we have to spend well over forty hours a week chasing capital to support only the mere basics of what a family needs.

parents who need childcare but simply can't afford it. While I firmly believe that children grow and flourish the best within a community of involved participants, it would be wonderful if every parent could personally provide for all of their children's needs—from food, to education, to emotional support. It's an ideal world where parents are allowed to raise their children with the utmost attention and care as opposed to being forced out of the home to run the gauntlet of commercialism. If a parent can provide unquestionable, immutable support to their children throughout their lives, they would have done their job as parents and they would have done it well. But, like I said, this is not the society we live in.

'Family values' is propaganda that gets thrown around a lot, but the truth of the matter is that capitalism (and the patriarchy, sexism, racism, and other oppressions that help to keep it running) puts no value in the family. We've moved that which is considered valuable out of the homes and the family and into the cockles of commerce. If money is not involved, it's not worth your time. This is ideology, but practically speaking, the capitalist system has created this completely abstract thing that must be obtained before you can acquire the basic necessities of life. There's little room to value the family when we have to spend well



inspiring task of caring for children, things I wouldn't have learned at home or from my family. I gained different perspectives and unfamiliar knowledge. If I had been left solely to my parents' devices, I would probably be wearing a suit everyday and working in a small box, staring at a computer screen. But, what they were never able to give me was that all too important sense of continuity and belonging. That enriching sense of community.

I can't imagine what life for a single, non-white, low income, non-english speaking mother is like in this country. And I certainly don't want to presume. But I do know that life for any parent is tumultuous and difficult. My parents, as the children of immigrants, wanted nothing more than to give me and my sister a better world than they had in which to grow up. And I think this mentality is true of most parents, it's why my grandparents immigrated to the states and why my parents worked non-stop at jobs they hated, and why I write articles for papers like Slingshot. I want my children to live in a better world than I do. But who has the time to fight for these improvements to the world? Go to work, take the kids to daycare and school, work overtime, maybe even a second job, pick the kids up, get them dinner, don't forget to help them with their homework, and on and on? It's already hard for parents to see their kids as much as they should, who wants to take more time away from them to go to meetings that may or may not help to improve the world we're leaving behind for them. This is where the Child Care

or Critical Resistance (an anti-prison organization)—groups that deal with, are led by, and are comprised of immigrant women, low-income women and women of color—has regular meetings and/or events. These organizations usually have an Event Coordinator who contacts the Childcare Collective's Core Committee. "The Core" as it is affectionately called, is a group within the collective that takes on the administrative responsibilities of fund-raising, recruiting, scheduling, etc.. To be on the Core one must first be a volunteer and complete the orientation as well as several training programs and, of course, have done repeated childcare for the collective. With some time and communication, a relationship is fostered between the Event Coordinator of an organization and the Core of the collective until the collective has a viable understanding of the organization's childcare needs. The Core then contacts, usually via e-mail and phone banking, their volunteer childcare providers to fill the needs of the organization. The volunteers then sign up as they are available and show up to the meeting and/or event with bright faces and warm intentions, and...Voila! You've got free, quality childcare.

The mission statement also reads, "We see childcare as a political act...In order for any movement to succeed, its ideas must be passed on from generation to generation. The Childcare Collective works to make sure that children are enjoying themselves and are informed about the work that the parents are

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# D.I.Y. COMMUNITY SAFETY

By I Steve

## no prisons,

If our philosophy for community safety is anarchic and decentralized, inevitably the average person will play a greater role than in the society where most of us were raised. Just like we live in a world organized around petroleum, television, race and gender oppression, we've been programmed to depend on a hierarchy of authority for safety and legitimization. And, just as we can live well without petroleum, tvs and bigots, we can live safely without police.

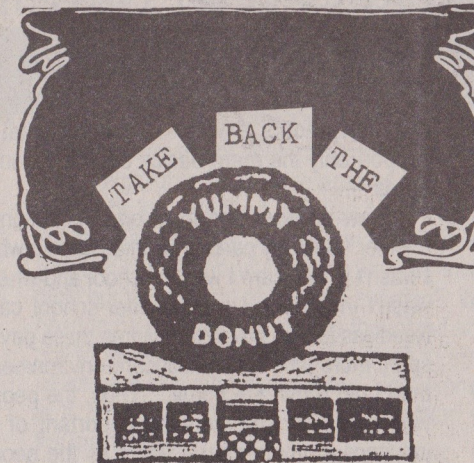
Many people, including anti-authoritarians, pride themselves on meeting their needs without requesting or attracting police attention. Communities of color, freaky looking people, people with unconventional

gender/sexual expression, people already known to the police, people who like drugs, very drunk people—why, the list of people with reservations about police interaction is endless. Add to this everyone with a do-it-yourself philosophy to life and those in remote areas without access to rapid law-enforcement response.

Why do people—some very often, others very rarely—think they need police, courts, and jails?

- Resolution or mitigation of a dangerous, violent, or even annoying situation.
- Dealing with on-going threats or unsolved crimes.
- Having a procedure for people to seek justice and hold each other accountable.
- Stabilizing the community amidst social upheavals and natural disasters.
- Getting into locked cars (your own), writing off fix-it tickets, finding towed cars, etc. (often created by cops, ironically)

It's not necessary that all of us have every skill for our communities to be safe. I can study the nuances of mediating disputes, while you can learn how to open car doors, and we're



carried away by a sudden emotion?

- Be aware of your body. Where it is and what messages it is sending? What is your voice like?
- Be aware of your emotions, how you're doing, and your stress level.
- Distinguish between vital issues, trivial matters, and concerns where an underlying need can be met a better way.

### Physical intervention

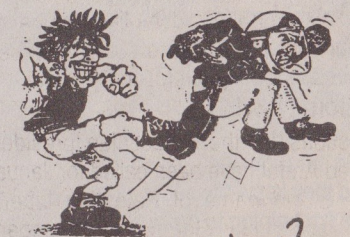
Keep in mind that physical intervention is undesirable unless verbal intervention has failed or there isn't time given the danger posed by the situation. The basic points about verbal intervention apply here, as does the sidebar. One difference is that when you become physical, the potential for violence dramatically increases. It is important to

## no cops

retrospect. And my best hope is that anyone inspired by this article succeeds in bringing tension to a halt at an earlier stage.

Suppose reason has failed and you are in an unreasonable situation. Everything is happening in fractions of seconds. There is no logical way to limit how it escalates. Now you have to trust your body and your instincts to do a good job. These are you just as much as your thinking mind.

As I've said, this is not a manual. I'm not qualified to teach you fighting techniques and don't hope to do so in a Slingshot article. Or to make a list of bullet points here. I don't know what your schedule is like or whether you



Who needs 'em?

## Conflict Resolution Techniques

from The Earth First! Direct Action Manual

- Take a few deep breaths
- Show the person/people respect
- Ask them to show you respect
- Tell them your first name, ask for theirs and

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have time for martial arts lessons or weapon training. I do feel that the more people know in a movement or community about the techniques and technologies of self-protection, the



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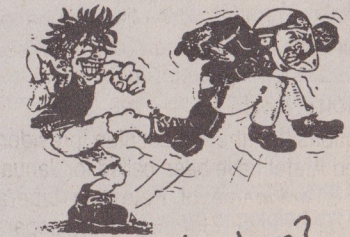
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Who needs 'em?

# Conflict Resolution Techniques

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- Take a few deep breaths
- Show the person/people respect
- Ask them to show you respect
- Tell them your first name, ask for theirs and use it often
- Use a low, calm tone of voice
- Use non-inflammatory language
- Use a non-threatening body posture (sit down, give them space)
- Don't make sudden movements
- Keep people from crowding around and talking over one another
- If you're already sitting down and you want to get up, do so slowly
- Look them in the eye, but let them avoid eye contact if they want
- Avoid using substances that interfere with clear thinking
- Be honest and sincere
- Ask them what it is they want and how you can help
- Listen intently, and don't talk until they're through venting
- Without necessarily agreeing, let them know you understand their position
- Tell them what you think they are trying to tell you
- Tell them what you like about their position
- Validate and show an understanding of their situation
- Don't debate the issue or confront their complaint directly, instead calmly communicate your reasons for your actions
- If you feel frustrated or you're not getting anywhere, step back and let another person

Just as we can live well without petroleum, tv and bigots, we can live safely without police.

both available to people who need us. But I will focus on situations when a need to protect others is unexpected. This is not a manual on dealing with threatening situations, but some things to consider before you intervene. My purpose here is to reflect on my own experience in unexpected interventions and share what I've learned.

### Stressful decisions

When you intervene to stop or prevent violence, you will probably act at one of five levels:

- Run or walk away
- Observe without intervening
- Mediate between people, or verbally confront an attacker
- Put your body in the way, restrain a person, or even threaten consequences
- Fight.

### Observing the situation

Observing is usually a fine option if violence isn't occurring, and always necessary if you may intervene later. Unlike the police, we may truly feel that a situation is none of our business. If you do stay uninvolved:

- Observe as much as possible without compromising your need for distance. Remember that people can be confronted or attacked simply for watching.

• Take inventory of whether you can involve others who can be more helpful. If you choose a solution other than observation, consider how

state the obvious, calmly name the reasons for your actions and to watch your posture, because the body is not always where the mind is. But at the same time, you need to think about how you will respond to violence. You should also consider that getting involved physically could put you in trouble with the law, if someone else decides to call the cops, regardless of your good intention.

People will escalate if they believe you're afraid, expecting to meet their demands through intimidation. While respecting your need not to be harmed, it is most important to avoid acting from fear. If you choose to

The more people who know in a community about techniques and technologies of self protection, the stronger and more self-reliant a people we are.

express fear don't let it be, or appear to be, your dominant motive. Confidence in your ability to defend yourself and others is helpful, and should certainly be cultivated. But physical intervention is always a risk, as everyone can be whooped by someone. Self-assurance serves one's commitment to doing what is best and life-affirming when we remember risk and consequence. We can create this courage by knowing how our intervention serves community. We all can help stop the cycle of bullsh\*t. Reflect on life and

have time for martial arts lessons or weapon training. I do feel that the more people know in a movement or community about the techniques and technologies of self-protection, the stronger and more self-reliant a people we are.

### Community solutions

Networking with your neighbors is a great way to increase the safety of your community. How a network of neighbors, many having different views than yours, may choose to interact with the police is unpredictable but worth the effort. What matters is that a response to violence is created by residents, not the police or municipal government. Be aware of people in your neighborhood showing signs of violence or sociopathy. Support children and youth struggling in the community.

Every person's well-being affects overall safety.

Having alliances with both your neighborhood and radical community can also protect each others' houses, defend vulnerable and targeted community members, and create coherent community demands and political positions. If there were ever civil disorder because of martial law, rioting or civilian conflicts, knowing who and what are safe is important. Stock up for earthquakes,



- Use non-inflammatory language
- Use a non-threatening body posture (sit down, give them space)
- Don't make sudden movements
- Keep people from crowding around and talking over one another
- If you're already sitting down and you want to get up, do so slowly
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  - Don't debate the issue or confront their complaint directly, instead calmly communicate your reasons for your actions
- If you feel frustrated or you're not getting anywhere, step back and let another person take over
- Clarify any possible misunderstandings
- Clearly tell them what you want
- Assure them that you want them to be treated fairly
- If the person is out of control, shift their attention away from sources of anger
- Find a common ground to build trust on
- Agree to disagree
- Be aware of other people's boundaries
- State the obvious (I don't want to fight)
- Leave them an honorable way out
- Don't take yourself too seriously
- Get advice from someone you trust
- Walk away



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- Observe as much as possible without compromising your need for distance. Remember that people can be confronted or attacked simply for watching.
- Take inventory of whether you can involve others who can be more helpful. If you choose a solution other than observation, consider how many others are available. By definition, it's a community solution when more people participate.
- Consider thoughtfully your feelings as to whether pure inaction or calling law enforcement is the more just choice when you can't intervene, though of course you would prefer neither.

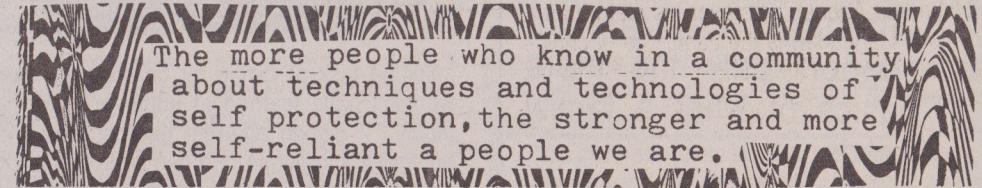
### Verbal intervention

Take a moment to read the excellent list of techniques (see sidebar this page) for diffusing and deescalating a situation. As you can't keep this list in front of you when talking to people, take note of which ideas appeal to you the most; you may feel most natural applying these. Also keep in mind the basic principles underlying these tactics:

- Be as conscious as possible of the person you are trying to communicate with, their state of mind, feelings, and what the person needs from this situation. Is the person about to get

is. But at the same time, you need to think about how you will respond to violence. You should also consider that getting involved physically could put you in trouble with the law, if someone else decides to call the cops, regardless of your good intention.

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express fear don't let it be, or appear to be, your dominant motive. Confidence in your ability to defend yourself and others is helpful, and should certainly be cultivated. But physical intervention is always a risk, as everyone can be whooped by someone. Self-assurance serves one's commitment to doing what is best and life-affirming when we remember risk and consequence. We can create this courage by knowing how our intervention serves community. We all can help stop the cycle of bullshit. Reflect on life and death, and what they mean to you—they will affect your choice of action.

Most situations benefit from having a context. When I have compassion for, or even like a person, or I don't think the crisis is important enough to come to blows, it turns out better than if I'm acting from preexisting beliefs. If you are a pacifist I don't think you should lie about that (or about anything) in a confrontation, but it probably won't diffuse the situation by making the aggressor feel safe. It could even instigate them.

### Oops! It's violence!

I am not a pacifist. I believe violence is acceptable to stop or sometimes prevent greater violence, or in a group process that all parties consent to. I do not believe initiating violence is an acceptable way to process anger. Despite my values, I don't think I've ever had to punch someone to create peace, and only a couple times do I think I should have in

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Every person's well-being affects overall safety.

Having alliances with both your neighborhood and radical community can also protect each others' houses, defend vulnerable and targeted community members, and create coherent community demands and political positions. If there were ever civil disorder because of martial law, rioting or civilian conflicts, knowing who and what are safe is important. Stock up for earthquakes, hurricanes or floods: enough for everybody. A combined effort can save a community.

If you are concerned with how people around you are responding to violence and crime, organize workshops on non-violent action, mediation, self-defense, emotional crisis intervention, intimate violence. Consistently clarify the sense of personal boundaries within the community. At a collective house, one hundred people gathered to confront violent real-estate speculators who were intimidating the residents. Another community developed a phone-tree for collective instant response to police misconduct.

What you do when there's no time to think depends on what you're prepared to do and what you're trained to do, and the agreements you have made with your inner self. Somebody once claimed that the difference between a community and a scene is the infrastructure we create to meet people's needs. Be serious about your preparations for seriousness.



# PLO to Arafat's Popular Successor: Stand Aside for the Puppet

By Zeev bin Natan

Palestinian freedom fighter Marwan Barghouti is Arafat's likely popular successor. But due to intense political pressure, he is standing aside in upcoming elections and urging support of moderate candidate Mahmoud Abbas — favorite of Sharon and the US.

Marwan Barghouti has been Fatah Secretary-General since 1994 and played a key role on the street in both the first Intifada and the present Intifadat al-Aqsa. Marwan sits in Nafha prison in the al-Naqab/Negev desert, sentenced last June 6 and now serving five life terms plus 40 years on trumped-up charges of multiple murder.

At the present critical juncture, anti-authoritarians should be part of a broad international movement to ensure the emergence of a new Palestinian leadership with strong ties to the Palestinian masses — a leadership that isn't a compliant puppet of the Israeli ruling class and the West, overseeing a vassal state totally controlled by Israel.

## Freedom Now!

Elections for the Palestinian president to succeed Arafat have been called for January 9, 2005. In the name of Palestine Liberation Organization unity, Barghouti has, apparently under great pressure from the PLO old guard, decided not to enter the fray as an independent and has called on supporters in the PLO new guard — and in effect on the Palestinian masses in the West Bank and Gaza — to support the PLO moderate candidate Mahmoud Abbas. That decision — which came after various 'informed' reports that

army in Ramallah on April 15, 2002, and has been illegally held in Israeli jails since then. He is kept in solitary confinement, separated from all other prisoners in Nafha, many of them Palestinian freedom fighters like himself. Marwan has repeatedly denied any involvement whatsoever with the deaths he has been charged with. During the proceedings against him, which began in 2003, he denounced the "show trial" as illegal, the Israeli court without any right to try him.

## Permanent State of Emergency

Many Palestinians believe Barghouti is the only man who can end the Intifada. But key figures inside the Israeli political-military elite may fear precisely that: they do not want to see an end to the violence and actively scheme to engineer its repeated 'churning,' provoking militant groups. They may well want a weak president who will be increasingly discredited in the eyes of the Palestinian masses, thus strengthening the hand of Hamas, the Aqsa Brigades and other militant organizations. As Giorgio Agamben has written: "How could we not think that a system that can no longer function at all except on the basis of emergency would not also be interested in preserving such an emergency at any price?"

That permanent state of emergency is the

become a fully quarantined isolate under Israeli spatial and economic control. This reality, culminating in the Great Wall of Palestine, reflects the radical separation of Jews and Arabs at all scales which has remained the fundamental principle of mainstream Zionist-nationalist policy since the earliest period of Jewish colonization in Palestine.

## The Path Forward

The real need over the longer haul is to build a mass non-violent movement of Israelis and Palestinians toward a single democratic non-national state, a "politics from below," forging bonds of ta'ayush (togetherness) in common struggle, and the return of refugees in massive numbers. Inside Israel, there remains the absolute necessity to move beyond the 'ethnocracy' of apartheid that Zionism has created for the 20 percent of its citizenry that is Palestinian [1], and the 'decolonizing' of the consciousness of the Jewish-Israeli masses. As historian Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin has stated: "Bi-nationalism, in the broad sense, is the question of the Arab-Jew, and its aim is to counter the Orientalist paradigm that pits one of these identities against the other [...]. As long as Israeli discourse is premised on the dichotomy Arab vs. Jew, it will be impossible to frame an alternative. Arab-Jew is, thus, a

# BUSH reality check

By PB Floyd

In thinking about Bush's reelection, we have to be realistic about what it means and what it does not mean. In the days after the election, so many people were depressed — actually depressed — and you heard a lot of loose talk like "I'm going to move to Canada." We have to have some perspective — no one is going to move to Canada. Hopefully, a lot of folks are going to redouble their efforts to create positive change and to struggle against the US empire.

For radicals, no matter what the election results were, the struggle for a new society would have continued, and so it shall. Election results to decide the new CEO of the US corporate empire aren't totally irrelevant to efforts to radically alter the society, but they certainly operate on a different plane, since it isn't who runs the US monster that is at issue, but that the monster is brought down.

But having said that, it's a mistake to pretend that because we seek goals far beyond a change in US leadership, Bush's victory wasn't a very harsh blow. Not just because he won — but because the election had the highest voter turn-out ever and tens of millions of people voluntarily voted for Bush. Radicals need to stay connected to reality and try to understand this kind of mass popular opinion. The fact that almost as many people voted against Bush as voted for him doesn't





terms plus 40 years on trumped-up charges of multiple murder.

At the present critical juncture, anti-authoritarians should be part of a broad international movement to ensure the emergence of a new Palestinian leadership with strong ties to the Palestinian masses — a leadership that isn't a compliant puppet of the Israeli ruling class and the West, overseeing a vassal state totally controlled by Israel.

### Freedom Now!

Elections for the Palestinian president to succeed Arafat have been called for January 9, 2005. In the name of Palestine Liberation Organization unity, Barghouti has, apparently under great pressure from the PLO old guard, decided not to enter the fray as an independent and has called on supporters in the PLO new guard — and in effect on the Palestinian masses in the West Bank and Gaza — to support the PLO moderate candidate Mahmoud Abbas. That decision — which came after various 'informed' reports that Barghouti had indeed opted for making a presidential bid from his prison cell — may help keep the PLO externally unified over the months to come, masking what is already a fierce power struggle for authentic directions within.

Yet it is widely acknowledged in the Palestinian street, where Marwan earned his credentials as the leader of the Intifada, that he is Yassar Arafat's popular successor. He is probably also the only man who can end the Intifada. It is also clear that Abu Mazen (Mahmoud Abbas), whatever his stature as a senior PLO leader, is the candidate of choice of Sharon, his cabal and the Euro-Atlantic power axis — a man whom they hope to wind around their political finger in any future 'negotiated' settlement.

Marwan's decision takes him out of what would have been intense international limelight, returning him to the limbo of his cell in the desert. At this crucial juncture, Israeli and international progressives should raise two demands: for Barghouti's immediate release from prison and for his safety. There is a definite danger the Israeli government may decide — before or after the election — to liquidate him if they think he is the true popular choice of the Palestinian masses. They have him in custody; his assassination, or a staged fatal 'accident,' would be child's play.

When sentenced last June, Barghouti stressed: "The continuation of the intifada is

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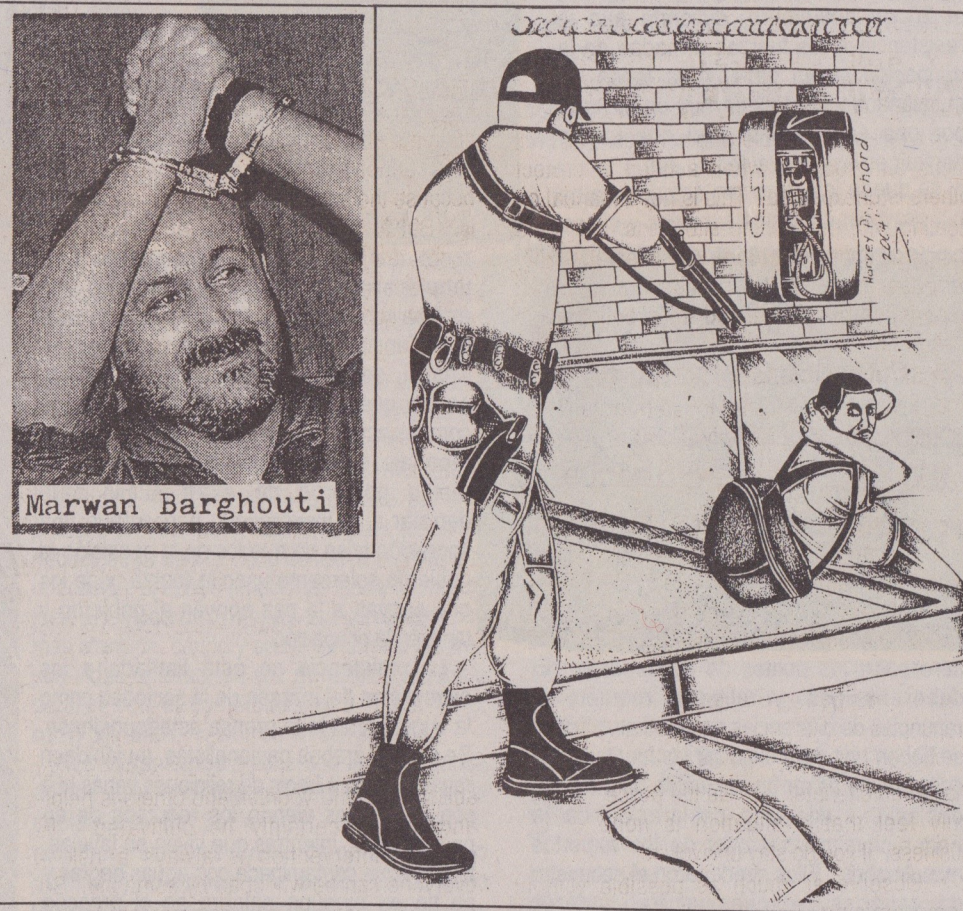
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It is hard to know whether most of Bush's supporters are arrogant, war-mongering, selfish, religious fanatics or whether there could be less discouraging explanations. For instance, some Bush voters appear to have voted based on a confused understanding of his policies and recent historical events — perhaps a lot of people got played by a sophisticated marketing job and the election result does not really represent a democratically approved return to the dark ages. We can hope that Bush voters are as internally contradictory, diverse and split as any group of tens of millions of people. The idea troubling radicals is that the election could have been a fundamental rejection of humanity, tolerance and decision making based on evidence — not religious belief.

While Bush's agenda is in your face scary, Kerry's version of reality was not ours — it was still one based on corporate control, US military domination and industrial exploitation of nature — just perhaps kinder and gentler on things like abortion and social welfare. We have to keep in mind that boring old daily life is still a more serious threat to human happiness and environmental sustainability than the particular leader of the empire. No matter who won, the next morning everyone was going to burn fossil fuels to take a shower, hop in their car, work their job, buy more shit,



subterfuge under which to continue the expansion of existing settlements, the demoralization of the Palestinian masses, and the incessant expropriation of ever more of their land in the West Bank.

### Election Doomed From the Start?

The poll itself can easily turn out to be a sham. We have no example of a supposedly

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Direct democracy can only spring from mass and massive unity of purpose and action among Palestinians and Israelis in direct action. Working in stages over say 15 years: from two



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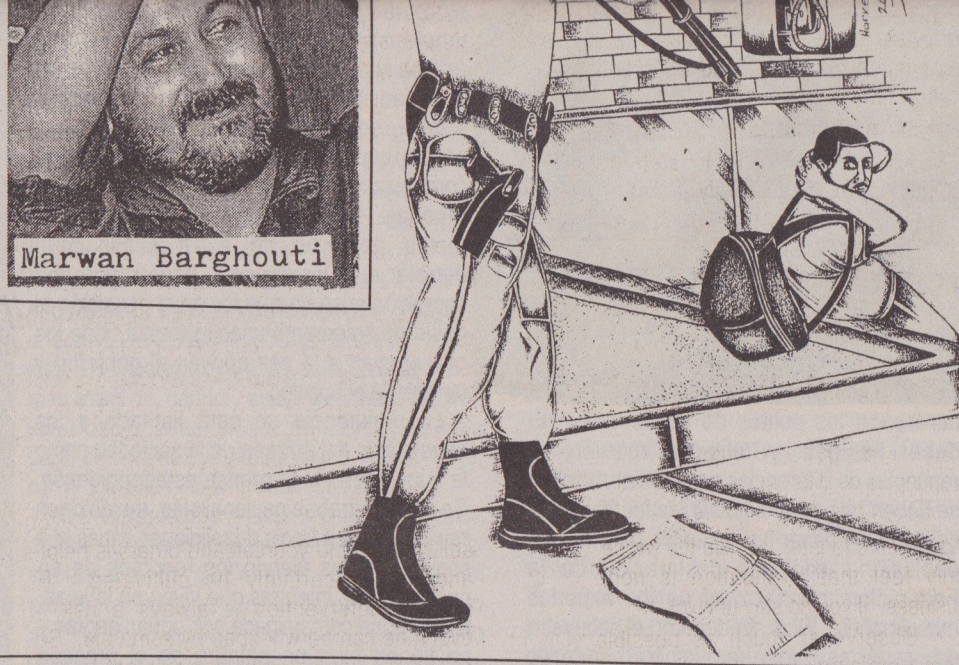
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When sentenced last June, Barghouti stressed: "The continuation of the intifada is the only path to independence. No matter how many they arrest or kill, they will not break the determination of the Palestinian people. I don't care whether I am sentenced to one life sentence, or 10 or 50; my day of liberty is the day the occupation ends. [...] The Israeli courts are a partner to the Israeli occupation. The judges are just like pilots who fly planes and drop bombs." During his trial, the Israeli peace bloc Gush Shalom protested demanding: "Barghouti to the negotiating table, not to jail!"

In an article in the Washington Post in January 2002, Marwan stressed: "I am not a terrorist, but neither am I a pacifist. I am simply a regular guy from the Palestinian street advocating only what every other oppressed person has advocated — the right to help myself in the absence of help from anywhere else."

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### Election Doomed From the Start?

The poll itself can easily turn out to be a sham. We have no example of a supposedly democratic election under the extraordinary conditions of a massive and oppressive Occupation. The West Bank today is a maze of road blocks and checkpoints that have earned the Occupation the name in Arabic *lhtilal*, the Suffocation.

The Israeli short-term strategy will be to pressure Mahmoud Abbas toward a set of compromises that will in effect produce what Arafat refused to agree to: an Israel-dominated Palestinian Bantustan, an archipelago of enclaves, behind a Great Wall and a high Gaza fence: the 0.5-state solution. The Palestinian refugees will continue to rot in their camps, half a nation in limbo with nowhere to go.

Israel itself has probably already destroyed the geographic basis for any viable two-state arrangement. What exists de facto is indeed two states: Israel and its settler state exclave on the West Bank, with prospects for Gaza to

call for partnership based on the decolonization of Jewish identity in all senses and contexts" [2].

Direct democracy can only spring from mass and massive unity of purpose and action among Palestinians and Israelis in direct action. Working in stages over say 15 years: from two (or even 1.5) states to one state and on to 'no state' — forward to a Cooperative Socialist Commonwealth of Canaan in federation with a radically democratized Jordan [3].

Over the shorter term, I would argue pragmatism, or a kind of utopian realism: press now for the "best deal" option for a Palestinian statelet, recognizing that such a Palestinian 0.5-state inevitably controlled by Israeli nationalists, international Capital and its elites is a short-term compromise and not a solution. Yet its nominal creation holds out a desperately needed space for Palestinians in which to breathe inside the *lhtilal* and its orchestrated nightmare.

1. See interview with Uri Davis: <http://mumbai.indymedia.org/en/2004/10/209807.shtml>

2. Quoted in Yael Lerer, "The Word in Times of Crisis," <http://oznik.com/words/041116.html>

3. B. Templer, "Tanks & Ostriches," The Dawn, August 2004, <http://the-dawn.org/2004/08/ostriches.html>

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That neither possible election result would address the greatest social threats doesn't mean there isn't important, inspiring work to be done to build a new world. In fact, there are abundant opportunities for progress that are totally unrelated to the quadrennial electoral cycle. When the world goes crazy, its time to turn our energy to our local communities and neighborhoods; to focus on doing things ourselves and setting up alternatives to the mainstream economy and culture.

Perhaps the election results will move some folks who were hoping things would be "okay" if Kerry got elected to realize they have no alternative to getting active. Elections are ultimately about surrendering power to rulers; activism is about empowerment — regular people participating in creating society.



Página EN español

# ENTRE la ESPADA Y la PARED

una mirada cercana a la lucha de

Estados Unidos no controla Iraq gracias a la arrolladora resistencia. Contrariamente a las afirmaciones de Estados Unidos, la insurgencia es primariamente iraquí, disfruta un amplio apoyo de la sociedad, se extiende sobre las líneas étnicas y religiosas y solamente está creciendo más fuerte. Pero como los iraquíes luchan para finalizar la ocupación que es una llave en las venideras elecciones, la gente se pregunta si las elecciones asemejarán alguna cosa ligeramente democrática. Iraq es un desorden que Estados Unidos hizo, pero que no puede limpiar, Estados Unidos es el desorden.

Estados Unidos puede estar ganando batallas pero esta perdiendo la guerra. Cada vez que Estados Unidos destruye una ciudad—mezquitas, casas al azar, hospitales—más luchadores de la insurrección se levantan. Con la batalla de corazones y mentes perdido un tiempo atrás, estrategistas Estadounidenses quieren sobre extender tropas americanas para continuar con la destrucción y las matanzas al azar en busca de "terroristas". Pero son comandos Estadounidenses quienes están cometiendo los crímenes de guerra. Los intereses de la clase gobernante que estimulan la guerra— el deseo para controlar no solo las reservas de petróleo sino también las economías Chinas y Europeas dependiente en la misma reserva van a abandonar. La estrategia de Estados Unidos para controlar funciona solo cuando todos juegan el mismo juego, capitalismo imperial. La gente de Iraq no están jugando

tácticas ofensiva de guerrilla o atacando cuando el enemigo es débil y entonces escabullirse. Musulmanes Sunni, quienes comprenden 20% de la población iraquí pero estaban en poder con Saddam, pueden perder significativa influencia si un gobierno elegido refleja el 60% de la mayoría Shi'ite.

El brazo fuerte de la resistencia Shi'ite es la milicia de jóvenes pobres de las comunidades urbanas de Muqtada al-Sadr. Los líderes Shi'ites, en particular el gran Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, por lo general no han atacado directamente a la ocupación, quizás porque como la secta mayoría ellos ganarían poder en las elecciones después de no tenerlo bajo el gobierno de Saddam. Al-Sadr criticó a la ocupación y su grupo fue atacado repetidamente por las fuerzas de E.U., empezando con el cierre de su periódico y culminando en una pelea violenta y alto al fuego en Najaf, la ciudad sagrada de los Shi'ite al finales de Agosto.

## Unificando la Resistencia

En un contexto donde las divisiones internas solamente sirven a ayudar a los EU, varios grupos están trabajando para unificar la resistencia. Los expertos musulmanes subrayaron la necesidad de evitar conflictos sectarios mientras que promulgaron un fatwa (edicto religioso) el 20 de noviembre, diciendo que la resistencia a las fuerzas armadas de la ocupación es un deber para todos los musulmanes. "El Irak de hoy es atacado por una conspiración real que quiere destruir su estructura social, aun





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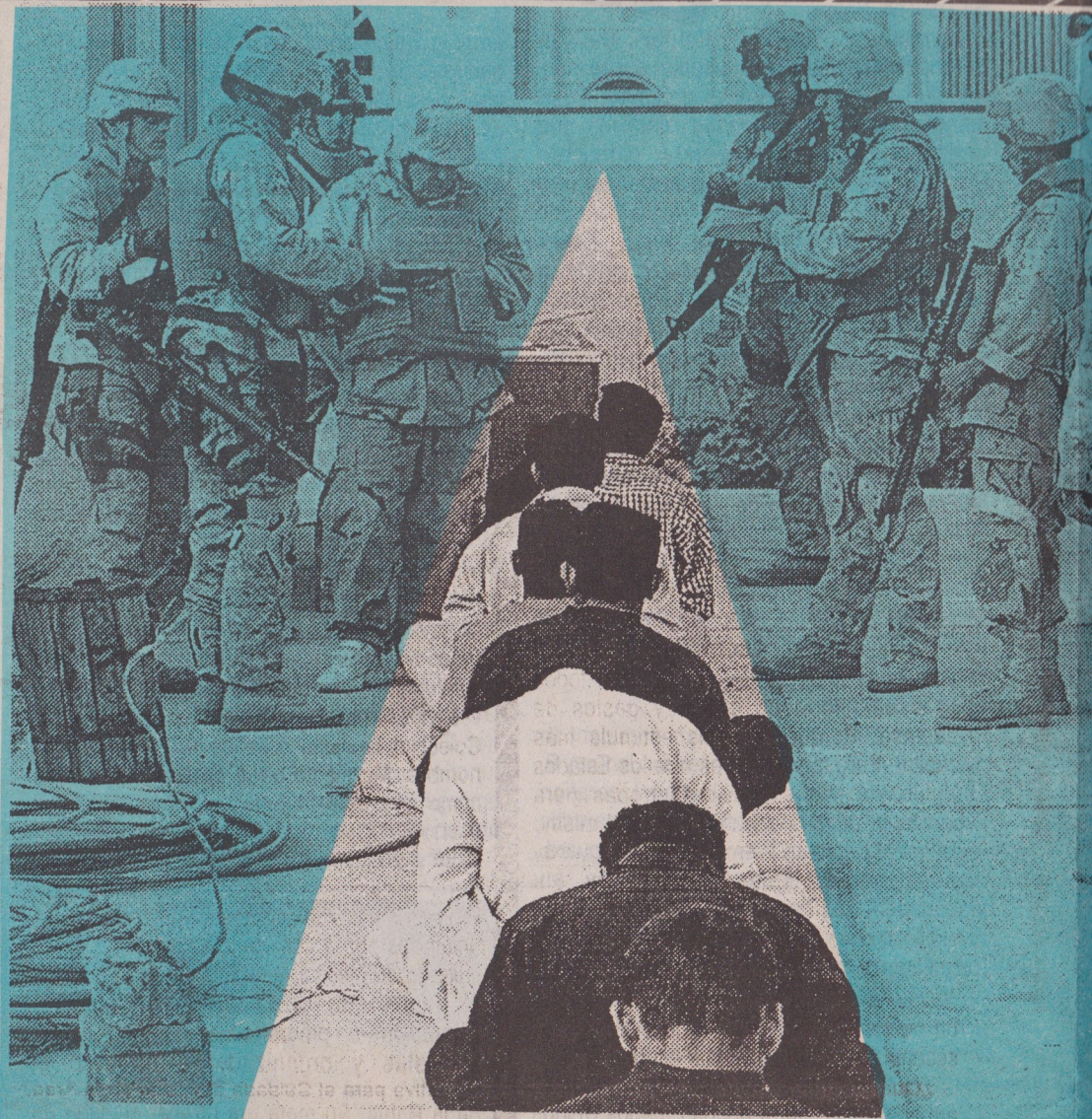
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## El alboroto continuo está empujando la opinión pública hacia el fundamentalismo

Estudios en febrero reportaron que solamente 21% del pueblo iraquí quería un estado islámico, el número subió hasta 70% en agosto

suele distinguir entre la resistencia y el terrorismo, ni entre la sociedad civil que está en contra de la ocupación y los que usan la violencia.” El líder religioso Jawad al-Khalisi, secretario general del congreso, señala que, “el enfoque de los medios de comunicación en la violencia y en el positivo reportaje extranjero de los esfuerzos del nuevo gobierno de Ayad Allawi para derrotar a la insurgencia, han creado una impresión falsa de que los de la oposición al gobierno solamente usan la fuerza, y de los que apoyan a la paz apoyan al gobierno y también la ocupación.”

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seguridad, y puede ser seducido por la esperanza. Dictaduras extremas siempre son nacidos en el contexto cuando naciones están buscando la seguridad. Pasó cuando el sha tomó poder en Iran, con Atatürk en Turquía, y Saddam Hussein aquí.”

#### Elecciones

Grupos como El Congreso de la Fundación Nacional iraquí quieren que las elecciones por los 275 miembros de la Asamblea Nacional tengan el enfoque de terminar la ocupación. Jugadores claves representan muchos grupos étnicos y religiosos del país, y la posibilidad de que una democracia representativa existe. Pero la CIA metiendo

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empujando bombas improvisados en los culos de los E.U. La estragedia Estadounidense esta fallando.

¿Quien es las resistencia? Un inventario de grupos del 19 de Septiembre del 2004 publicado en el periodico de Baghdad *Al Zawra* en la lista tres principales coaliciones Sunni, son milicias Shi'ite y nueve grupos tacticamente basados en secuestros. Cuatro de los últimos estan especificamente asociados con Al-Qaeda, como la célula de Zarqawi que se ha convertido en el reciente terrorista favorito de la media Estadounidense. Los secuestros no disfrutan tanto apoyo popular como los otros grupos: "Sin ninguna evidencia, Bush, Blair y el presidente Iraqui Iyad Allawi's regimen, vergonzosamente declaran que ellos estan solo persiguiendo el secuestrador Jordano, Zarqawi y otros "terroristas extranjeros," escribe Sami Ramadani en *Arab News* de Saudi Arabia. La gente de Falluja, sus lideres, negociadores y insurrgentes siempre han denunciado a Zarqawi y sostenido que tales bandas han sido animo para debilitar la resistencia.

Apesar de que los medios de comunicación Norteamericanos repetidamente han dicho que la resistencia es trabajo del partido Ba'ath de Saddam, fuentes difieren la fuerza de estas conexiones. Varias de las pequeñas facciones Sunni son opuestos a Saddam, mientras grupos que son explicitamente Ba'athista reportidamente estan involucrados en supliendo armas y financiando las operaciones en vez de la lucha actual. Grupos Sunni tienden a usar las

acrecentar los puntos de desacuerdo. El deber nacional y religioso requiere la renuncias de diferencias como estas. Todos se deben unir para expulsar las fuerzas de la ocupación y hacer un irak unido para todo la población," dijo una declaración de la Federación Internacional de los expertos musulmanes. Ellos condenaron el secuestro de rehén, ataques a trabajadores humanitarios y de la prensa, y dijeron que los prisioneros de guerra deben ser bien tratados.

El Congreso de la Fundación Nacional Iraquí que disfruta de mucho apoyo, respalda las oraciones conjuntas de los Sunni-Shia, una practica importante en la revolución de 1920 que terminó con el control colonial de Gran Bretaña. Establecido en Julio de este año, el grupo, junta los Izquierdistas, Kurdos y Cristianos con Ba'athistes (pre-Saddam) y miembros de poderosas asociaciones cléricas de los Sunni y Shia. Aunque el congreso no rechaza a la resistencia armada, aboga por la resistencia pacífica en vez de milicias fundamentalistas como la de Al-Sadr. En una entrevista con *La Guardian* (Gran Bretaña), el portavoz del congreso Wamidh Nadhmi dijo que la division real en Irak no existe entre los Arabes y Kurdos, Sunni y Shia, ni seculares y religiosas sino entre "el terreno en pro de la ocupación y el terreno en contra." Los que estan en pro son completamente afiliados a el EU, o a la Gran Bretaña, en efecto títeres, o no vieron otra manera de derrocar a Saddam sin ocupación. Desgraciadamente, los que estan en pro no

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La resistencia no está limitada a los extremistas del margen de la sociedad como la sugerencia de la prensa estadounidense. Se incluye árabes nacionalistas, mujahideen musulmanes, e iraqis de religiones varias que son "ultrajados viendo los recursos de su país robados, mientras que viven en favelas, toman agua contaminada con aguas negras y no tienen ninguna palabra en el proceso político," escribe Haifa Zangana en *The Guardian*. Miles de personas manifestaron en todo Irak en solidaridad con Falluja, una ciudad que nunca se sometió completamente a la dominación de los ingleses coloniales ni al régimen de Saddam.

"El pueblo Iraquí no está enfocando en si las cosas pudieron ser mejores si no hubiese pasado la invasión de los gringos. Lo que quieren saber es como y cuando el mundo tan inseguro que les enfrenta cada día va a cambiar. Hay un discurso constante sobre si las fuerzas extranjeras hacen las cosas mejores o peores," dice Jonathan Steele en *The Guardian*.

El clérigo radical islámico Al-Sadr ha ganado amplio apoyo no por sus perspectivas religiosas, sino por el hecho que ha sido amenazado por los EU. El alboroto continuo, está empujando la opinión pública hacia el fundamentalismo. Estudios en febrero reportaron que solamente 21% del pueblo Iraqui quería un estado islámico, el numero subió hasta 70% en agosto. Estos estudios no hacen la distinción importante entre un estado islámico radical o moderado, pero la tendencia está clara. Según Sheikh Khalidi, "El pueblo Iraqui está buscando la

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# Página EN español

## La ESPADA y la PARED

gracias a Blanca y  
j wingnut!

por x wingnut  
traducción por Maneli, Ursula K. y Chomskiss  
y cassandra

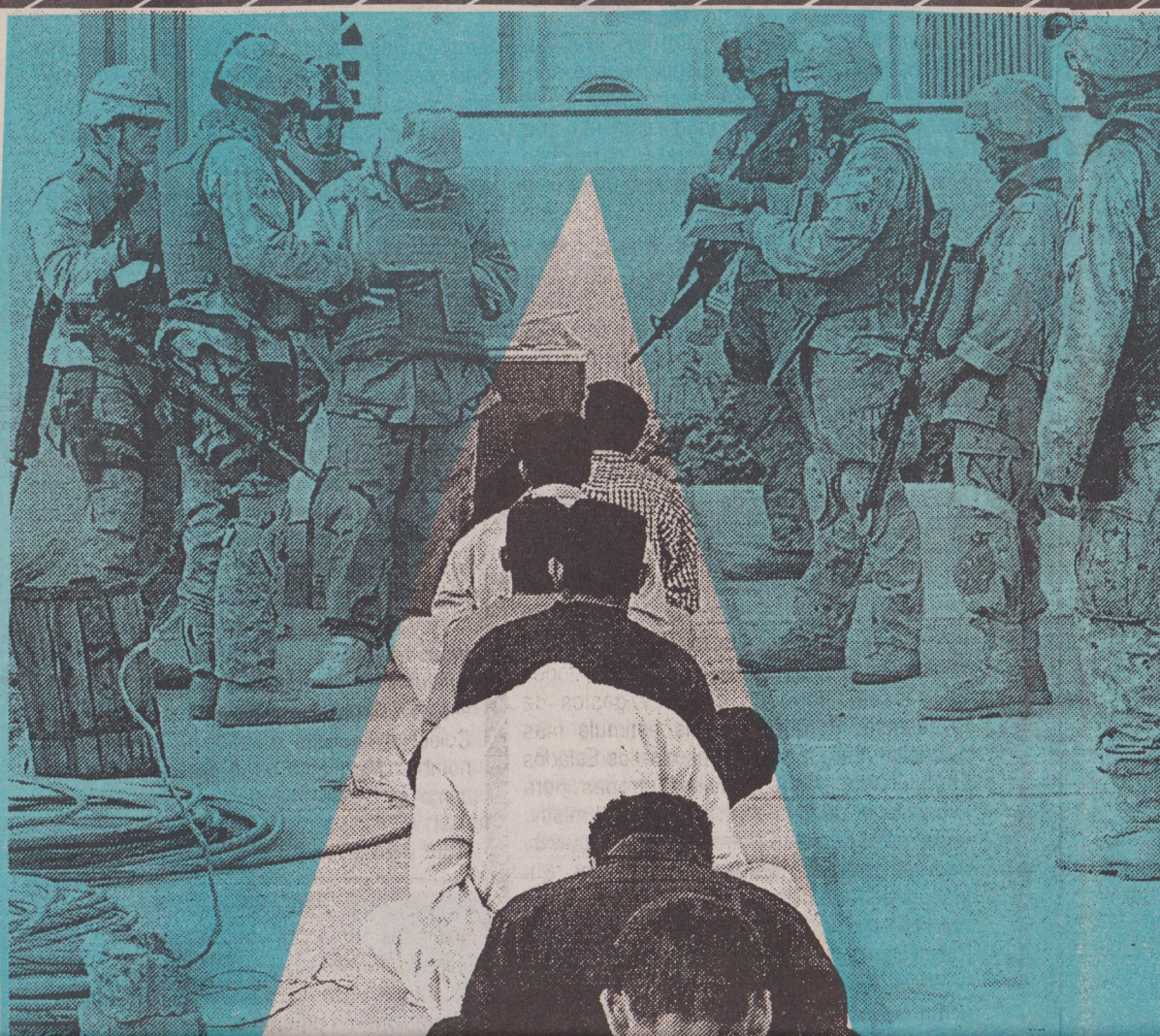
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El brazo fuerte de la resistencia Shi'ite es la milicia de jóvenes pobres de las comunidades urbanas de Muqtada al-Sadr. Los líderes Shi'ites, en particular el gran Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, por lo general no han atacado directamente a la ocupación, quizás porque como la secta mayoría ellos ganarían poder en las elecciones después de no tenerlo bajo el gobierno de Saddam. Al-Sadr criticó a la ocupación y su grupo fue atacado repetidamente por las fuerzas de E.U., empezando con el cierre de su periódico y culminando en una pelea violenta y alto al fuego en Najaf, la ciudad sagrada de los Shi'ite al finales de Agosto.

### Unificando la Resistencia

En un contexto donde las divisiones internas solamente sirven a ayudar a los EU, varios grupos están trabajando para unificar la resistencia. Los expertos musulmanes subrayaron la necesidad de evitar conflictos sectarios mientras que promulgaron un fatwa (edicto religioso) el 20 de noviembre, diciendo que la resistencia a las fuerzas armadas de la ocupación es un deber para todos los musulmanes. "El Irak de hoy es atacado por una conspiración real que quiere destruir su estructura social y



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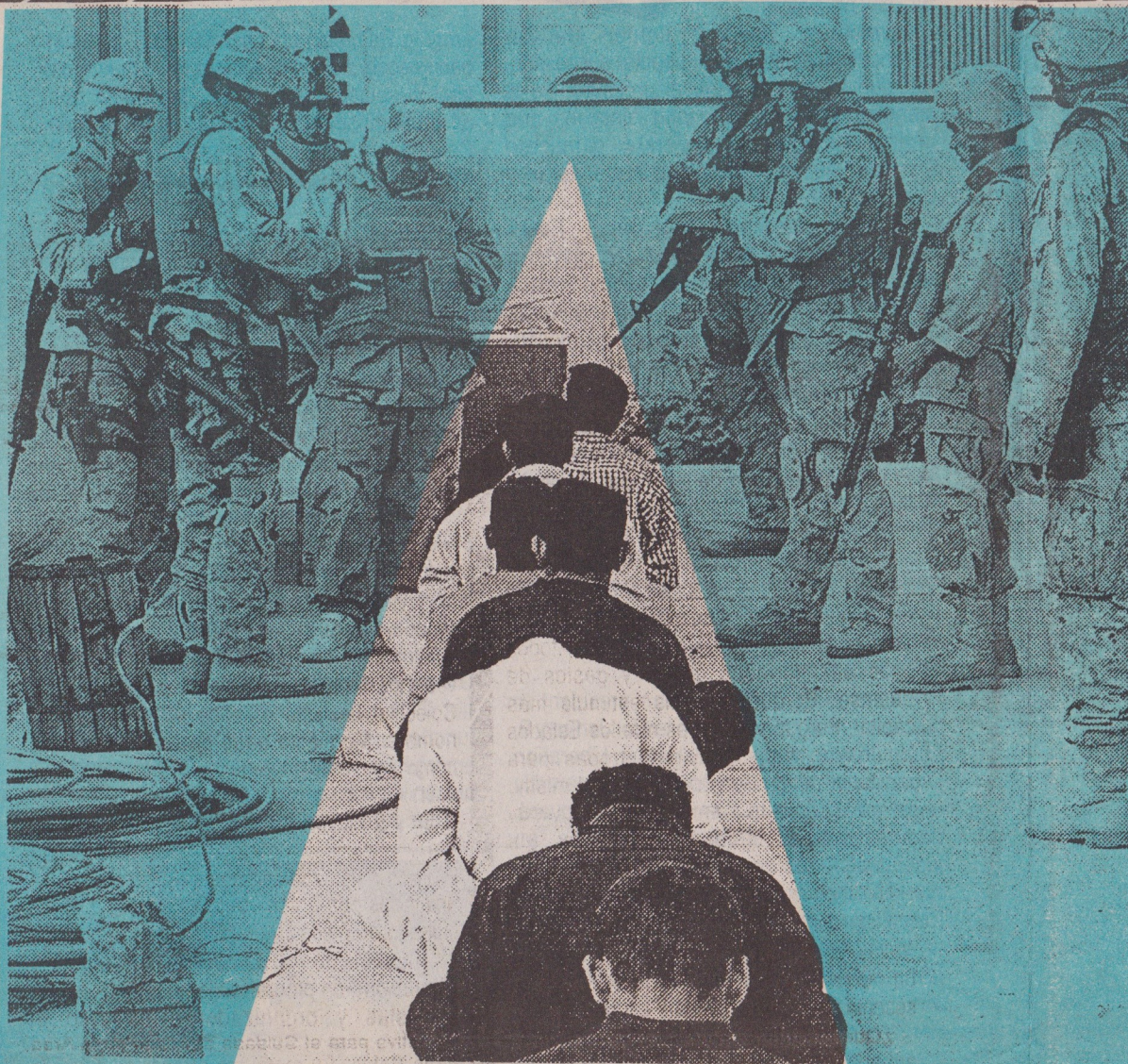
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suele distinguir entre la resistencia y el terrorismo, ni entre la sociedad civil que está en contra de la ocupación y los que usan la violencia." El líder religioso Jawad al-Khalisi, secretario general del congreso, señala que, "el enfoque de los medios de comunicación en la violencia y en el positivo reportaje extranjero de los esfuerzos del nuevo gobierno de Ayad Allawi para derrotar a la insurgencia, han creado una impresión falsa de que los de la oposición al gobierno solamente usan la fuerza, y de los

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acrecitar los puntos de desacuerdo. El deber nacional y religioso requiere la renuncias de diferencias como estas. Todos se deben unir para expulsar las fuerzas de la ocupación y hacer un irak unido para todo la población," dijo una declaración de la Federación Internacional de los expertos musulmanes. Ellos condenaron el secuestro de rehén, ataques a trabajadores humanitarios y de la prensa, y dijeron que los prisioneros de guerra deben ser bien tratados.

El Congreso de la Fundación Nacional Iraquí que disfruta de mucho apoyo, respalda las oraciones conjuntas de los Sunni-Shia, una practica importante en la revolución de 1920 que terminó con el control colonial de Gran Bretaña. Establecido en Julio de este año, el grupo, junta los Izquierdistas, Kurdos y Cristianos con Ba'athistas (pre-Saddam) y miembros de poderosas asociaciones cléricas de los Sunni y Shia. Aunque el congreso no rechaza a la resistencia armada, aboga por la resistencia pacífica en vez de milicias fundamentalistas como la de Al-Sadr. En una entrevista con *La Guardian* (Gran Bretaña), el portavoz del congreso Wamidh Nadhmi dijo que la division real en Irak no existe entre los Arabes y Kurdos, Sunni y Shia, ni seculares y religiosas sino entre "el terreno en pro de la ocupación y el terreno en contra." Los que estan en pro son completamente afiliados a el EU, o a la Gran Bretaña, en efecto títeres, o no vieron otra manera de derrocar a Saddam sin ocupación. Desgraciadamente, los que estan en pro no

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La resistencia no está limitada a los extremistas del margen de la sociedad como la sugerencia de la prensa estadounidense. Se incluye árabes nacionalistas, mujahideen musulmanes, e iraquíes de religiones varias que son "ultrajados viendo los recursos de su país robados, mientras que viven en favelas, toman agua contaminada con aguas negras y no tienen ninguna palabra en el proceso político," escribe Haifa Zangana en *The Guardian*. Miles de personas manifestaron en todo Irak en solidaridad con Falluja, una ciudad que nunca se sometió completamente a la dominación de los ingleses coloniales ni al régimen de Saddam.

"El pueblo iraquí no está enfocando en si las cosas pudieron ser mejores si no hubiese pasado la invasión de los gringos. Lo que quieren saber es como y cuando el mundo tan inseguro que les enfrenta cada día va a cambiar. Hay un discurso constante sobre si las fuerzas extranjeras hacen las cosas mejores o peores," dice Jonathan Steele en *The Guardian*.

El clérigo radical islámico Al-Sadr ha ganado amplio apoyo no por sus perspectivas religiosas, sino por el hecho que ha sido amenazado por los EU. El alboroto continuo, está empujando la opinión pública hacia el fundamentalismo. Estudios en febrero reportaron que solamente 21% del pueblo iraquí quería un estado islámico, el número subió hasta 70% en agosto. Estos estudios no hacen la distinción importante entre un estado islámico radical o moderado, pero la tendencia está clara. Según Sheikh Khalidi, "El pueblo iraquí está buscando la

seguridad y puede ser seducido por la esperanza. Dictaduras extremas siempre son nacidos en el contexto cuando naciones están buscando la seguridad. Pasó cuando el cha tomó poder en Iran, con Ataturk en Turquía, y Saddam Hussein aquí."

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La gente encontra de la guerra no pueden ser obstaculizados por la ocupación. No sabemos como parar al gobierno de E.U., pero ni siquiera ellos saben lo que hacen. Ellos no planearon la guerra bien y no saben como enfrentarse a la resistencia fuerte y creativa. Pero siguen adelante, dogmáticamente edictos del capitalismo para construir una democracia de marionetas en una fundación de cuerpos iraquíes muertos. No como los burócratas del gobierno, nosotros no tenemos que pasar nuestros días silenciosamente, porque nosotros tenemos millones de personas y millones de formas diferentes para resistir la guerra. Como no hay solo un grupo dirigiendo la resistencia en Iraq, no hay una imprimección azul por el movimiento anti-guerra aquí, entonces, deberíamos parar de mirar y empezar a seguir nuestros corazones y mentes. Si nosotros hacemos todo lo que podemos para parar la Ocupación con el contexto de nuestras vidas diarias, la resistencia aquí sería tan variada y impredecible que sería la definición de la inestabilidad política.

Ultimamente, E.U. puede bombardear la mierda fuera de Iraq cuando quieran si sus tropas cooperan y si las cosas se mantienen estabilizadas—paralizadas—alejadas. Las tropas estan votando por su terreno; de 4,000 reservistas recientemente llamados al servicio, 1,800 pusieron denuncias encontra de la milicia, y 700 simplemente no aparecieron. Un Guardia Nacional de unidad se refuso a su misión...entonces! Cuando nos despertaremos aquí?



gracias a Blanca y  
Jwingnut!

por x wingnut  
traducción por Maneli, Ursula K. y Chomskiss  
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## los Iraquis

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# Los Niños DE LA REVOLUTON\*

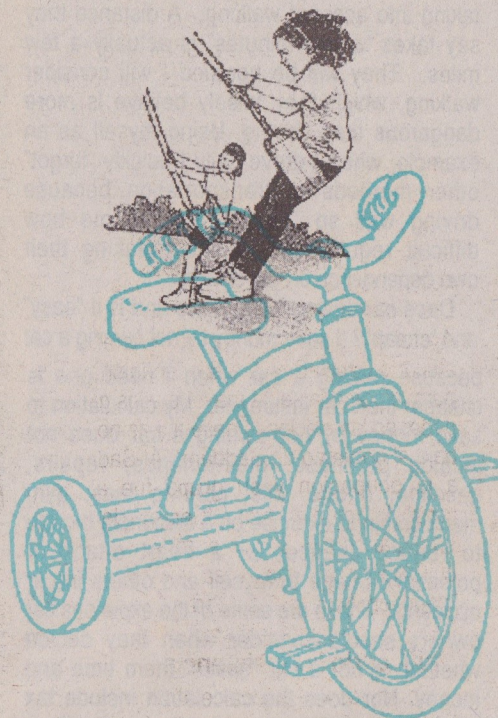
## el colectivo para el cuidado de los niños y el movimiento social

por paseo  
traducido por Denise y Maneli

Si nuestros hijos nos desprecian, nuestro movimiento terminará.

Hace cinco meses que hago trabajo voluntario con el Colectivo para el Cuidado de Niños, y cada vez que recibo un correo electrónico que anuncia "Oportunidades del Cuidado de Niños", es como si fuese un espía que no conoce cual será su proxima aventura. Aunque no se que me espera, se que sentiré gratificación al fin. Sin embargo, me doy cuenta de que esto es algo más que el cuidado de niños gratis y voluntario. Lo empiezo de entender en su totalidad. Hace seis años que cuido a niños de alguna manera. Cuando vine al "Bay Area," deseaba continuar con este trabajo. Es cuando encontré al Colectivo para el Cuidado de Niños. Pensé, 'Chido, una oportunidad para trabajar con los niños.' No pensé en el aspecto político, ni en como apoyaba al movimiento social, el que tiene su origen unicamente en la gente. Simplemente quería trabajar con los niños porque me da mucho gusto y gratificación. Pero ahora me estoy involucrando en manifestaciones o reuniones y veo a los niños que conozco por mi trabajo con el Colectivo. Les saludo y ellos me reconocen por nombre. Me siento parte de una comunidad, como que estoy ayudando a construir algo fuerte.

En el 2002, un grupo de gente trabajando en San Francisco con el Colectivo de Mujeres del Programa de Trabajadores Temporales fueron animados por la importancia de la calidad del cuidado de niños y notaban la falta. Utilizando el modelo de la Escuela de Unidad y Liberación—un programa de entrenamiento de



mismo vestido todo elegante, trabajando en una caja, mirando a la pantalla de la computadora todo el tiempo. Pero, lo que no fueron nunca capaces de darme fue el sentido del continuación y de sentirse que uno pertenece a algún lugar. Esto, enriqueciendo el sentido de comunidad.

No puedo imaginar la vida de una madre soltera, no-blanca, pobre y no hablante de inglés en los Estados Unidos. Y ciertamente no quiero ni puedo presumir. Pero si sé que la

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Organización y el Centro del colectivo hasta que el colectivo tiene una idea de las necesidades de la Organización. El centro, entonces, contacta, via email o telefónica a sus voluntarios para llenar las necesidades de la Organización. Los voluntarios firman con caras contentas y buenas intenciones y....VOILA!!, hay ahí una guardería gratis!!

La misión de la declaración también dice: "Vemos a las Guarderías como un acto político. En relación de algún movimiento, para que triunfe, sus ideas tienen que ser pasadas de generación en generación. El Colectivo para el Cuidado de Niños funciona para asegurarse que los niños se diviertan y estén informado de el trabajo que los padres están haciendo. Nosotros esperamos ayudar a los niños a situarse con ellos mismos como valiosos e importantes miembros de la comunidad y de un movimiento!!

Whoaaaaa.....Imagínense eso!!! Unos pares de voluntarios ayudando a crear comunidades de miles de generaciones y movimientos. Y yo ya he empezado a verlo. Veo mujeres de color inspiradas y organizadas haciendo trabajos importantes y yo llego a interactuar con sus niños, fuertes e independientes. Y me pregunto que es lo que esos niños sacarán de sus interacciones. A veces sueño sobre ellos, hablando con sus padres sobre sus luchas internas o sus pasos del futuro. Y estoy agradecido de que tomé un rol, aunque fuese pequeño, en el desarrollo de su movimiento. Hubo una vez que un niño que empezó a sentirse ansioso y me preguntaba que donde estaba su

**Nos enfrentamos mucho con la**



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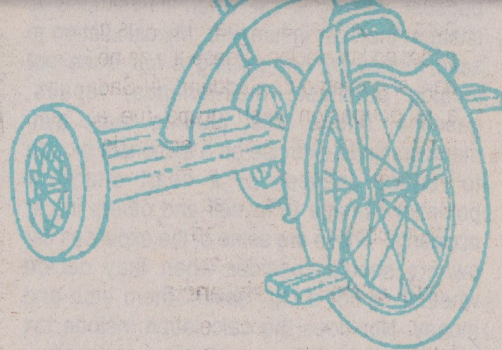
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En el 2002, un grupo de gente trabajando en San Francisco con el Colectivo de Mujeres del Programa de Trabajadores Temporales fueron animados por la importancia de la calidad del cuidado de niños y notaban la falta. Utilizando el modelo de la Escuela de Unidad y Liberación—un programa de entrenamiento de activistas y organizadores—se creó el Colectivo para el Cuidado de Niños en la Area de la Bahia. Su meta era ofrecer cuidado de niños gratis, estable y conciente a la gente que lo necesitaba más. Pero quienes eran ellos? La respuesta obvia era, por su puesto, los parientes. Pero hoy en día bajo el régimen opresivo, hay tantos parientes que lo necesitan pero no pueden hacer ese gasto. Mientras los niños crecen y se desarrollan, lo mejor como parte de una comunidad de participantes dedicados, sería maravilloso si cada pariente pudiese proveer personalmente para todos las necesidades de sus hijos desde la comida a la educación, el apoyo emocional. Sería un mundo ideal si los padres pudiesen criar a sus hijos con más atención, cariño y apoyo inmutable durante sus vidas enteras, en vez de estar forzados a batallar con el comercialismo a fuera. Pero, como dije antes, no vivimos en esa sociedad.

Nos enfrentamos mucho con la propaganda de "los valores familiares," pero la verdad es el capitalismo (la patriarquía, el sexismo, el racismo, y las otras formas de opresión que lo mantiene) no aprecia a la familia. Quitamos lo preciso de la casa y de la familia y lo empujamos a los brazos del comercio. Si no se involucra el dinero, no vale su tiempo. Es ideología, pero de verdad el capitalismo nos fuerza obtener algo bastante abstracto antes de nuestros necesidades básicas. No hay campo para apreciar a la familia si hay que pasar más que cuarenta horas siguiendo al capital para



mismo vestido todo elegante, trabajando en una caja, mirando a la pantalla de la computadora todo el tiempo. Pero, lo que no fueron nunca capaces de darme fue el sentido del continuación y de sentirse que uno pertenece a algún lugar. Esto, enriqueciendo el sentido de comunidad.

No puedo imaginar la vida de una madre soltera, no-blanca, pobre y no hablante de inglés en los Estados Unidos. Y ciertamente no quiero ni puedo presumir. Pero si se, que la vida de padres es tumultuosa y difícil. Mis padres eran niños de inmigrantes, lo único que querían era un mundo mejor para mi y mi hermana. Y pienso que esta realidad es verdadera para la mayoría de los padres. Los padres de mis abuelos inmigraron a los Estados y es por eso que mis padres trabajaron sin parar en trabajos que odiaban y por eso yo escribo para el Slingshot. Quiero que mis hijos crezcan en un mundo mejor que el que yo estoy dejando detrás...Pero quien tiene el tiempo para luchar por mejorar el mundo?. Vete a trabajar, lleba los niños a la escuela, trabaja extra y a quizás un segundo trabajo, recoje a los niños, cocinalos comida, ayúdalos con la tarea y etc. Es ya difícil para los padres ver a sus niños tanto como ellos quisieran como para ir a juntas y reuniones, o para no mejorar el mundo en el que vivimos.

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La idea es simple: Hacer del mando del reprimido y el no representado lo primordial. Soportando y creando movimientos que solo ellos pueden dirigir, y ofrecer necesidades

de niños. Si niños funcionan para asegurarse que los niños se diviertan y estén informado de el trabajo que los padres están haciendo. Nosotros esperamos ayudar a los niños a situarse con ellos mismos como valiosos e importantes miembros de la comunidad y de un movimiento!!!

Whoaaaauu.....Imaginense eso!!! Unos pares de voluntarios ayudando a crear comunidades de miles de generaciones y movimientos. Y yo ya he empezado a verlo. Veo mujeres de color inspiradas y organizadas haciendo trabajos importantes y yo llego a interactuar con sus niños, fuertes e independientes. Y me pregunto que es lo que esos niños sacarán de sus interacciones. A veces sueño sobre ellos, hablando con sus padres sobre sus luchas internas o sus pasos del futuro. Y estoy agradecido de que tomé un rol, aunque fuese pequeño, en el desarrollo de su movimiento. Hubo una vez que un niño que empezó a sentirse ansioso y me preguntaba que donde estaba su **Nos enfrentamos mucho con la propaganda de "los valores familiares," pero la verdad es el capitalismo, la patriarquía, el sexismo, el racismo, y las otras formas de opresión que lo mantiene, no aprecian a la familia.**

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como en Iraq? Los iraquíes quieren un final a la violencia; la mayoría de la gente ahí simplemente quieren seguir con sus vidas con algún nivel de seguridad y estabilidad. La gente en Los Estados Unidos, particularmente la clase media y la casi media, tienen la habilidad de seguir con sus vidas, incluso si el gobierno esta creando algún desastre en otras partes. En un reportaje reciente de la CNN/USA TODAY, se demostró que casi la mitad de la población en E.U. pensó que mandar tropas a Iraq fue un error. Que están haciendo esos 125 millones de personas para *parar la guerra*?

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Ultimamente, E.U. puede bombardear la mierda fuera de Iraq cuando quieran si sus tropas cooperan y si las cosas se mantienen estabilizadas—paralizadas—alejadas. Las tropas estan votando por su terreno; de 4,000 reservistas recientemente llamados al servicio, 1,800 pusieron denuncias en contra de la milicia, y 700 simplemente no aparecieron. Un Guardia Nacional de unidad se refuso a su misión...entonces! Cuando nos despertaremos aquí?

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De niño pasé mis días entre instituciones. Mis padres trabajaban y cuando no estaba en el "day care"(guardería) estaba en la escuela. Cuando no estaba en la escuela, estaba en otra forma de guarderías. Como la mayoría de niños en estos tiempos, pasé más tiempo en ambientes de "escuelas" que con mi familia. Así, la gente que me cuidaba eran tan importante para mí como una influencia en mis años de formación como la gente que me trajeron al mundo y que lleban mi sangre. Tengo que decir, de todas formas, que no hubo ninguna cohesión, no hubo una ideología de unidad entre la gente que me cuidaba que me dejasen saber lo que pasaba. No me tomen mal, aprendí mucho de los individuales que se atrevieron e inspiraron a trabajar con niños; como cosas que nunca hubiese aprendido en casa o con mi familia. Reciví diferentes perspectivas y conocimientos extraños. Si hubiese estado simplemente solo con los emblemas de mis padres, estaria ahora

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Asi es como funciona: Una organización como POWER (People Organized to Win Employment Rights) (Gente Organizada para Ganar Derechos de trabajo)— o el Colectivo de Mujeres o Critical Resistance (una Organización anti-carcel), grupos que trabajan, y que son dirigidos y comprometidos con mujeres inmigrantes, pobres y de color. Estas organizaciones, normalmente tienen un Coordinador que se contacta en el "Centro del Comité" del Colectivo para el Cuidado de Niños.. El "Centro" es un grupo del Colectivo que tiene las responsabilidades financieras, como de hacer beneficios, horarios y más. Para estar en el "Centro", uno debe primero ser un voluntario y complementar una orientación, como también algunos entrenamientos y, por supuesto, hayan tambien cuidado a niños. Con algún tiempo y comunicación, se crea una relación entre el Coordinador de una

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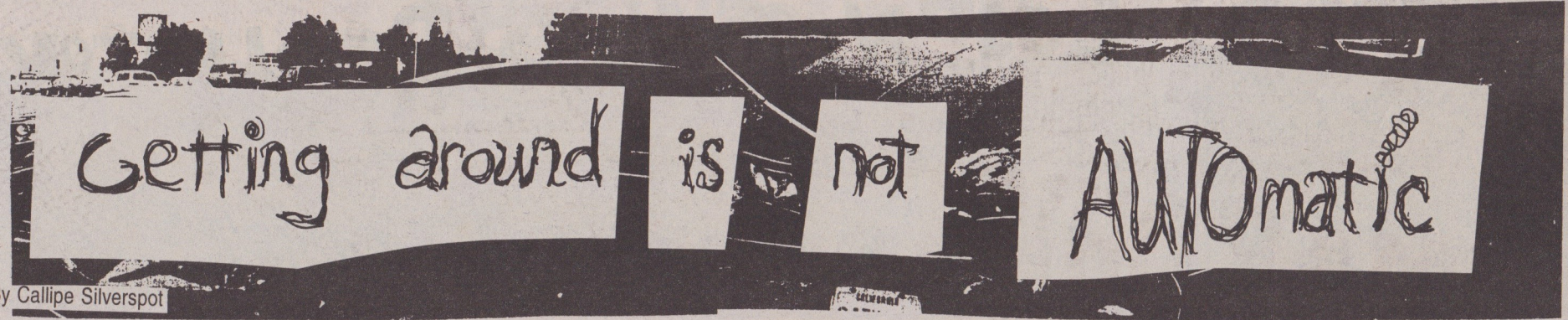
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"El Colectivo para el Cuidado de Niños espera jugar una parte importante en la construcción de un movimiento que reconoce y hace primordial las voces y agendas politicas de mujeres y madres, especialmente mujeres de color, pobres e enmigrantes. Las necesidades de los padre no han sido tradicionalmente reconocidas y el deseo es esporádicamente por lo mejor"

Lo más importante es recordar que el Colectivo no es el movimiento. o la mayoría del tiempo, el Colectivo está comprometido a gente joven y educada que tiene algún privilegio. La belleza de esto es, que esa gente ha encontrado un lugar para ellos mismos y sus talentos en movimientos dirigidos por gente de color. Pero es importante no idealizar la posición del Colectivo. Ellos se dan cuenta de que el movimiento pertenece a las mujeres de color que lo dirigen. Nosotros, los voluntarios, simplemente estamos ahí para ayudar a sus niños.





By Callipe Silverspot

On vacation recently, I experienced driving a rental car in Hawaii for two weeks and re-visited London for a few days. I was reminded of the incredibly efficient and extensive public transport possibilities as well as the walkable distances provided by an urban dense city. I have never owned a car and usually go to work and errands by bicycling, walking and taking public transport. My recent experience made me realize how quickly driving feels like normal behavior even to a non-driver.

At home, when I am in a hurry to go to work, run errands and relax I automatically include in my schedule walking or bicycling to the supermarket and the Farmer's Market. Including transport time, as well as waiting in line at the cashier, I can usually plan to spend one to two hours shopping. That time also includes running into friends and socializing, particularly at the Farmer's Market. Shopping is therefore not a quick trip for me. However, I notice when I visit my friends and family and we go to the supermarket they also do not "save" time when we drive, due to suburban sprawl making it impossible for people to do basic errands without driving long distances in a car.

Relaxed on vacation, without any time constraints, I became so tolerant of driving I started to think and act like a regular driver. My thinking changed after only the first week of daily driving, when I had spent over ten years as a regular pedestrian and bicyclist. I automatically thought of driving to the market from the hostel where I was staying, 1 to 2 miles, which I would usually walk or bicycle at

taking into account walking. A distance they say takes "a few minutes" is actually a few miles. They will be horrified I will consider walking, which they falsely believe is more dangerous than driving. Using myself as an example, when I drove daily I quickly "forgot" other methods of transportation because driving was so "easy," showing me how difficult regular drivers find breaking their own dependence on car driving.

Does car driving "save" time and is it "easy" and "cheap"? I save money by not owning a car because renting a car when I need one is cheaper than car insurance. My calculation to save money by not owning a car does not include purchase, maintenance, repairs, gasoline, bridge tolls, parking fees, gym membership to exercise on a stationary bicycle to reduce chances of a heart attack or potential damage to myself and others in car accidents. These are some of the expenses car owners should consider when they decide whether or not a car "saves" them time and money. Nor does the calculation include tax subsidies to highway construction and military expenditures to protect "our" oil fields in foreign countries, expenses which I would be paying whether or not I own a car, which I personally consider taxation without representation, since I do not agree with either of these expenses.

We need to recognize a myth linked to the "American Dream." You cannot "save" time. No bank accounts enable you to earn interest on "time savings." Time passes, regardless of how you "spend" it. We are not "free to

resources? Do we really need the job requiring us to drive or is the job just supporting us driving?

We need an attitude readjustment, prioritizing what is important to us, and rethinking how we use our time. We may think driving instead of waiting for the bus is "freedom," but we forget the hidden costs of driving -- working to pay for the car, to pay taxes to repair environmental damage, to pay for wars to protect "our" oil. Would we rather relax in the company of other people, napping or reading on public transport or increase our stress level in traffic, exposing ourselves to the higher danger risk of car driving?

Everyone drives for different reasons which bicycle, pedestrian and public transport advocates must recognize and be sympathetic towards in order to support car drivers switching to alternatives. Friends can help friends to come up with creative solutions for alternative routes to work, school and shopping, for example. However, we must also actively confront stereotypes car drivers have about alternatives.



expensive, does not go to enough destinations or is too infrequent, we need to challenge these arguments as a vicious cycle. If people never use or advocate to improve public transport then governments will never focus on fixing public transport or improving city planning to be more pedestrian friendly. In Los Angeles, bus riders formed a union to clean up the bus system. Riders were typically low income minorities who often do not have a voice in government. Everyone needs to consider the long term hidden costs that our continued dependence on single use automobiles have on our society.

I became more aware returning to the Bay Area and taking our light rail (BART). After taking the London Underground the day before in rush hour I realized "Rush hour" on BART resembles a weekend at a train station in London, when you compare how few people are on the BART platforms and in the trains. Transport alternative advocacy groups need to move beyond events such as "Bike to Work Day" and "Auto Free Day" once a year to once a month events to encourage the public to use driving alternatives more. All of us need to work on city planning which creates urban density.

Car driving is the number one killer for those under 45. Only cancer and heart attacks are more dangerous than cars for those over 45. The public's misconstrued ideas of the dangers of walking, bicycling and taking public transport reflect the public health community's complete failure to deal with the danger of driving as a public health issue. Even



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Only because this was unusual behavior for me did I recognize a problem. The price of gasoline in Hawaii, the most expensive in the U.S., did not dissuade me from wanting to drive extraneously. The locals and tourists I spent time with gave me directions in terms of driving time, not walking time, because car drivers think subconsciously as car drivers and not in alternatives to driving, making it even more difficult to think of alternatives. When traveling in areas where people usually drive I often find locals unable to give clear directions

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We need to recognize a myth linked to the "American Dream." You cannot "save" time. No bank accounts enable you to earn interest on "time savings." Time passes, regardless of how you "spend" time. We are not "free to spend" time in the pursuit of happiness or anything else since humans do not have control of time, we have yet to invent time machines. Therefore we either are happy or unhappy, regardless of how much time we have in life. Instead of "spending" or "saving" time, consider the alternatives. How do we occupy ourselves? Do we devote our time to activities we care about or to occupations which burn out our souls? How do we consume the lives we have? Do we waste or conserve our resources -- our own resources -- our social groups, families, acquaintances and friends, our minds, our health, our ability to find hope and escape into the wilderness -- besides the earth's

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People who claim they do not want to take busses because busses are dirty, noisy, smelly and dangerous are expressing a classist fear. In reality, the majority of bus riders are low income people who cannot drive — children, the elderly and the disabled — hardly dangerous! As for people who say public transport is too

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No one has an excuse to transform auto usage into the exception, instead of the rule, because ultimately we are all affected by the U.S.'s auto-dependency.

## ALL ACROSS THIS LAND I SEE.... INFO SHOPS

Here's some new spots around the country you can drop in on if you're trying to find some radical folks. Happy rambling!

### Idle kids collective, Detroit

Check out this all-volunteer run collective DIY/anarchist book/record store & infoshop in

### Better Than Television - Charlottesville, Virginia

Check out this spot - 106 A3 Goodman St.,  
Charlottesville, VA 22902 (434) 295-0872

### Casa De Pueblo - Los Angeles

Contact 503 230-8360, cec@lists.riseup.net.  
They're at 1540 S.E. Clinton, PDX, OR  
97202.

### Free Mind Media Guild - Santa Rosa, CA

### Venus Envy, Halifax, Nova Scotia

They're a feminist book store and sex shop way  
up north! Check them out at 1598 Barrington  
Street Halifax, Nova Scotia 902 422-0004.



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### Black Sheep Books opens in Vermont

This all-volunteer workers' collective bookstore just opened and specializes in radical and scholarly used books. They also host weekly anti-authoritarian educational and political events — from talks to films to anarchist socials — in the worker-owned and operated collective cafe in the same building. 4 Langdon Street, Montpelier, VT 05602 [www.blacksheepbooks.org](http://www.blacksheepbooks.org)

### All People's United Infoshop - Fayetteville, AR

We think they're located inside 5 Squirrels at 523 W. Poplar Fayetteville, AR. Send mail to them c/o Lissa, 635 Whitham Ave #9, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

### Crossroads Infoshop - Kansas City

They just opened and sell radical books, etc. Check out 1830 Locus St. Kansas City, MO 64108, 816-283-3510.

### Better Than Television - Charlottesville, Virginia

Check out this spot - 106 A3 Goodman St., Charlottesville, VA 22902 (434) 295-0872

### Casa De Pueblo - Los Angeles

A community center with a silk screen project that is open for shows and events, etc. 1498 Sunset Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90026, 213 481-1986

### Spindle Records - Lincoln, Nebraska

We have a new friend in Lincoln, Nebraska. Drop by and they'll help you hook up with the radicals in Nebraska. 122 N. 14th St. Lincoln, NE 68508 402 435-8350

### Everyone's Books - Brattleboro, VT

Visit Everyone's Books to link up with radical stuff in the area. 25 Elliot St. Brattleboro, VT 05301 802 254-8160

### Cascadia Rising Infoshop - Portland, Oregon not gone

Oops - Slingshot was incorrect in reporting that the Cascadia Rising infoshop was gone. According to them, the Infoshop is currently open on Mondays from noon to 5 pm for people to work on bicycles in the bike library. They're looking for folks to get involved to keep it open more often and invite groups in the Portland area to use the space for meetings or events.

Contact 503 230-8360, [cec@lists.riseup.net](mailto:cec@lists.riseup.net). They're at 1540 S.E. Clinton, PDX, OR 97202.

### Free Mind Media Guild - Santa Rosa, CA

Free Mind Media has been a Mobile infoshop for the last two years in Sonoma County CA. FMMG is now financially secure and lookin' to open up shop. They're actively searching for a space to call home. They're still seeking more volunteers, \$ donations, book donations and publicity. Contact [laidoff@sonic.net](mailto:laidoff@sonic.net), [freemind@riseup.net](mailto:freemind@riseup.net) [www.fmmg.org](http://www.fmmg.org)

### Documentations, informations, références et alternatives - Montréal, Quebec

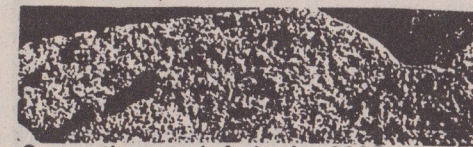
DIRA distributes radical information in Montréal and has an anarchist lending library and infoshop. It's a couple of years old and just moved and expended. Check it out: 916 Ontario E., Montréal, QC Canada H2L 1P4 Tél.: 514.524.4529.

### Librairie Alternative closes - L'Insoumise fills space

The long-standing Librairie Alternative book shop has closed. A new anarchist book shop operated by different folks is at the same location. 2033 St-Laurent Montréal, QC Canada H2X 2T3

### Venus Envy, Halifax, Nova Scotia

They're a feminist book store and sex shop way up north! Check them out at 1598 Barrington Street Halifax, Nova Scotia 902 422-0004.



### Corrections to info in the 2005

#### Slingshot Organizer

Ouch! - Lots of mistakes in the 2005 Slingshot organizer radical contact list. We do our best - tell your friends to fix these entries:

- The phone # for Jane Doe Books in Brooklyn is now (917) 664-5141. I visited this place when I was in NYC for the RNC and it is a great small spot.

- The address for our Australian distributor Beating Hearts Press should be PO Box 444 (NOT 404.) Based on our communications with them, they're a fun bunch down under.

- The Salon infoshop in Tel Aviv has moved and is now at Alemonit alley 3. A lad recently back from Israel also suggests visitors check out One Struggle In Jaffa, an animal rights group — [www.onestruggle.org](http://www.onestruggle.org).

- The Olympia zine library (located at Last Word Books) has moved. They're now at 211 E 4th Ave. Olympia, WA 98501.

Compiled by PB Floyd



# WHY I BECAME AN ANARCHIST WINGNUT

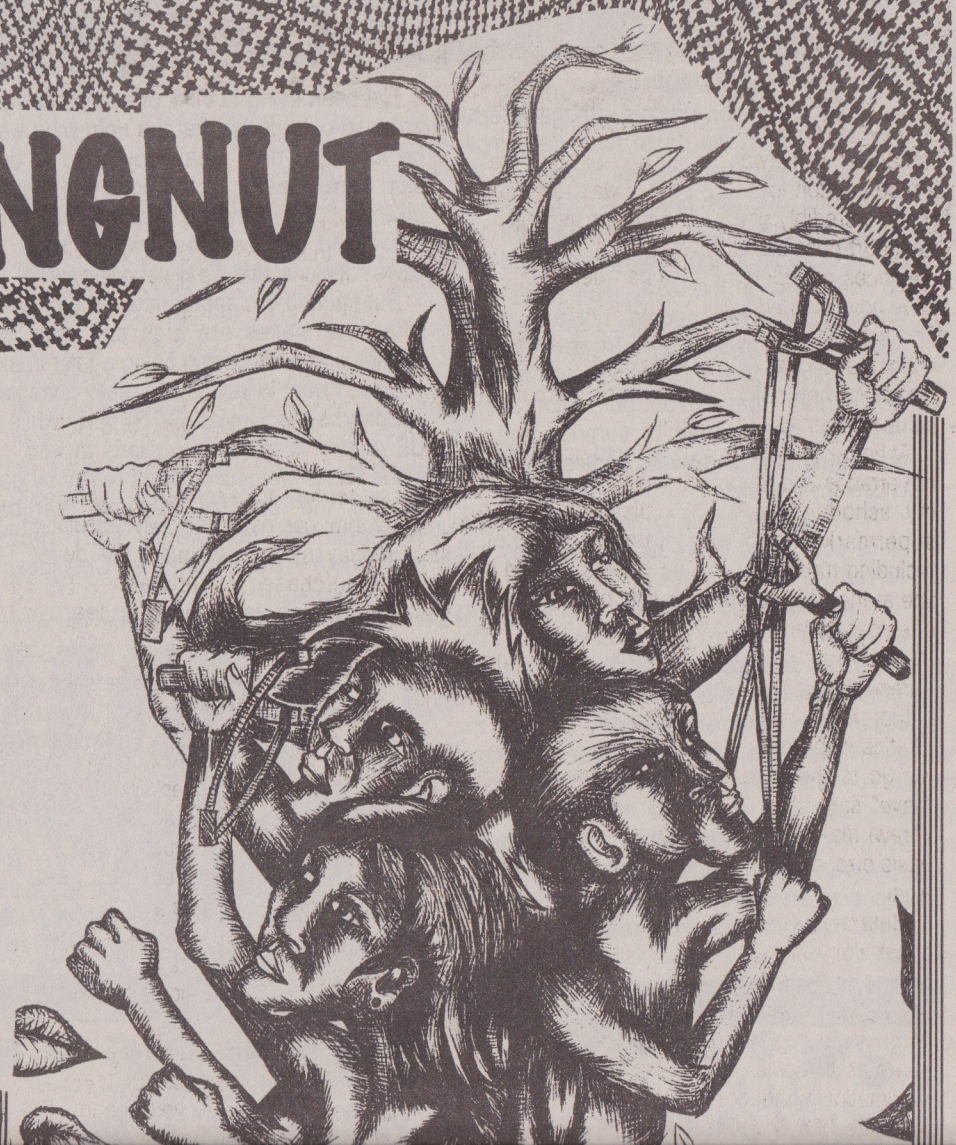
By Breezy

I remember reading "Reviving Ophelia" by Mary Pipher my Sophomore year of high school and then reading a similar book "Odd Girl Out" by Rachel Simmons which pretty much summed up my entire feeling of being female growing up in the public school system. It felt for the first time that I was a person sucked in to all these problems of manipulation, gossiping, and appearance. Before, I felt there was something wrong with me.

Why couldn't I just get with the program? I didn't want to get with the program. I wanted to express the opinions and feelings that represented myself, and not worry what the most popular girl thought while I was growing up. I was already considered a woman of size and all shots at trying to conform were already doomed. I was never able to completely sell my soul and give up my personality, which is basically how all my peers seem to make it through. The consequences of being yourself were dire and harsh. By the seventh grade I became very depressed, my almost 4.0 GPA in 6th grade became 2.0 hitting junior high, and by the end of freshman year I was medicated for depression and seeing a therapist.

On the same day that I exited high school I registered at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa. I ended up taking Philosophy of Religion and it exposed me to so much. It was so nice to be in a room with people that asked questions and were curious. I'm interested in Existentialism and reading Sartre now. Would I have found that on my own? I can only wonder.

So, while at school I had been involved in all these different campaigns to end hunger or end vivisection, and I met someone at an Orange County Peace Coalition meeting who calls herself an anarchist. She exposed me to anarchist theory and other people who call themselves anarchists. She got me thinking about systemic causes. For instance if eating disorders are mainly blamed on portrayals of women in the media, what causes the media to portray women in that way? I came to the conclusion, all these campaigns I've been working on are ultimately anti-capitalist. The need to oppress people, animals, and the environment to make profit and this monstrosity called the state cannot be reformed. So I said goodbye to the Green Party and have been involved with the Mother Earth Collective in Orange County & SCAF





# ANARCHIST

# WINGNUT

By Breezy

I remember reading "Reviving Ophelia" by Mary Pipher my Sophomore year of high school and then reading a similar book "Odd Girl Out" by Rachel Simmons which pretty much summed up my entire feeling of being female growing up in the public school system. It felt for the first time that I was a person sucked in to all these problems of manipulation, gossiping, and appearance. Before, I felt there was something wrong with me.

Why couldn't I just get with the program? I didn't want to get with the program. I wanted to express the opinions and feelings that represented myself, and not worry what the most popular girl thought while I was growing up. I was already considered a woman of size and all shots at trying to conform were already doomed. I was never able to completely sell my soul and give up my personality, which is basically how all my peers seem to make it through. The consequences of being yourself were dire and harsh. By the seventh grade I became very depressed, my almost 4.0 GPA in 6th grade became 2.0 hitting junior high, and by the end of freshman year I was medicated for depression and seeing a therapist.

My outlook changed after I received a "Why Vegan?" packet from an older peer in high school. It explained the consequences of an omnivore diet on the environment, animals, and humans. I was immediately disgusted by the pictures of a factory farm and three months later I became vegan. It's been two years now since I've changed my diet. This pamphlet gave me the first insight to other atrocities besides what had always been right in front of my face, like the beauty industry's impact on women.

Becoming vegan was the beginning of my political life. Shortly after, I got involved with Santa Ana Food Not Bombs through our

On the same day that I exited high school I registered at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa. I ended up taking Philosophy of Religion and it exposed me to so much. It was so nice to be in a room with people that asked questions and were curious. I'm interested in Existentialism and reading Sartre now. Would I have found that on my own? I can only wonder.

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During the summer I didn't take any classes because I took trips with my friends. One of the events I went to in the Fresno mountains was Occupied Territory. It was an anti-authoritarian gathering that included a mix of education and socializing. The education part included many workshops to choose from, facilitated by someone who was educated on whatever particular subject the workshop focused on. My favorite workshop was "Radical Mental Health". The facilitator gave us background information on psychology from an anti-capitalist perspective, which I had



I was lucky not to be put on a SSRI drug such as Prozac that has huge side effects. I felt the drug I was taking, Wellbutrin, had helped

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Becoming vegan was the beginning of my political life. Shortly after, I got involved with Santa Ana Food Not Bombs through our Animal Rights Club on campus. Food Not Bombs serves free vegetarian meals to people and that helped me to face the issues of homelessness and poverty. Through this group I met people in other organizations, and when the war started, I got involved in the anti-war movement.

My experiences created this passion for making change. When I met someone from the Green Party at Food Not Bombs, I started focusing on electoral politics for about a year starting the summer before junior year. I have no problems working with adults, since I was an only child, and we worked on voter registration, prop initiatives, and Peter Camejo's Campaign. I even went up to San Francisco for Matt Gonzalez's Campaign. I almost went to the National Convention, as a delegate, to vote for Nader or David Cobb for President and make decisions about the Green Platform. I had gone many times to State Conventions and voted on the State Platform.

I became involved with this whole other community that gave me hope for an alternative, and knowing these alternatives existed, I could not stay in high school any longer.

I found out about the California High School Proficiency Exam by accident. I bumped into a person I knew from school who told me she was going to take the test. I found the application to take the test on the internet, and during my Junior year, I took the test. Some of my teachers hadn't even heard of it and thought I was making it up. It was an amazing experience to go back to school on the first day back from winter break, return my books, say goodbye to my teachers & friends, and show them the diploma I got in the mail because I passed the test.

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This made me think of my experiences in therapy. After I was prescribed anti-depressants, I went into therapy. I felt lucky that I didn't talk to someone who made me feel wretched. That it wasn't all my fault. The idea of breaking down community building hit home with me because nobody in my neighborhood talks to each other. I imagine they all go to work and come home and watch television. Not to mention, taking care of their kids. The idea of having a neighborhood community seems utopian. Why?

The "Radical Mental Health" workshop included conversation on traditional methods of solving problems such as AA for alcoholism and medicating people for various diagnoses and whether some diagnoses were even valid. The facilitator passed around a magazine created by The Icarus Project. It focused on looking at the diagnosis of Bi-Polar that included personal stories from people diagnosed with it and what that means in our society. The problem of whether to take medicine to make yourself "normal" was discussed and how that made you dependent on the system.

The subject of medication obviously hit close to home for me. I stopped taking my medication a couple months ago, after this workshop, and have been doing fine. At the time of the workshop I discussed the fact that



I was lucky not to be put on a SSRI drug such as Prozac that has huge side effects. I felt the drug I was taking, Wellbutrin, had helped me not to reach such a high level of depression. Looking back now, I think my days off the medicine are much more balanced emotionally because maybe when the medicine wore off I got really depressed. I was diagnosed at a time when I had to deal with extreme situations and I cried a lot. It has made me wonder whether anti-depressants were just another numbing device, like alcohol or cutting, but acceptable to make me be less emotional. Would I have experienced severe depression without the drugs at the time?

I believe the place of drugs will always be debated. I don't have an answer. Things like pharmaceutical company's ethics and the extremity of the diagnosis should be taken into consideration. The most frequent thing I hear is that people don't want to be dependent on this corrupt system for their mental state of well-being. This is a very sound argument, in my opinion, that probably why I stopped my medication. I hear the US has the largest diagnosis of depression among teenagers right now. What does that say about our society? I remember in sophomore English we had to read *Catcher in the Rye*. Our teacher passed out an article from "Time Magazine" and it was about whether or not Holden Caulfield would be prescribed Prozac. Was it normal teenage behavior, or by today's standards would that have been means for medication?

A major influence on me, what I most identify with, has been the anti-civilization and technology movement known as primitivism or green anarchy. My favorite writer about this is Chellis Glendinning, who wrote "My Name is Chellis and I'm in Recovery from Western Civilization." She is a psychologist, political writer, and activist. Basically the bottom line behind primitivism is that industrialism and

agriculture have made us lose our connection with the earth. Instead of human society being nomadic and running with the earth's seasons, we are now using and abusing the earth's resources and have lost harmony, creating an exploitative, hierarchical society. The earth was just the beginning. Agriculture exacerbated gender segregation, with women "inside" and men "outside." Technology intensified the division of labor that creates hierarchy, and it also takes away people's self-sufficiency. It's like going to the grocery store. When we run out of oil, and food can't be transported, we're going to wish we had the ability to provide food for ourselves. The capitalist imperialist nations, with all the 'isms' including racism, classism, ageism, speciesism and sexism, are all exploiting each other and the earth, to gain a profit now.

Since I am here and part of this I want to do my best to make alternatives to the ways we live now. We can live in a decentralized community without government, jobs, or extraneous technology. Education is a way of making myself more knowledgeable and a means of creating this alternative. Growing up I was taught to see it as a way to make a living. Of course I want to be able to support myself, but why take the fun out of learning? Since they can't even teach us that Columbus didn't discover the Caribbean, I suppose I can't expect too much.

Psychology seems like a good start for me because it's about understanding people's behavior and figuring out how problems can be fixed. I want to study psychology and eventually create a radical clinic that offers a space for people to come together while waiting for all this to be dismantled. There are better, alternative ways to deal with mental health and I will be part of that movement.



# Let's Get FREAKY...



## Continued from page 1

we share a common struggle with the rebels in Iraq — we reject the brutal American empire and its occupation of our homes. But conditions are not precisely the same — conditions are totally inappropriate for tiny bands of youth to “go underground” and take up small arms in the USA. That may sound romantic to a few people, but a romantic suicide doesn't help anyone. However, the root of guerrilla tactics still apply — we need to pick fights that favor our spontaneity, flexibility, the element of surprise and our other strengths and avoid battles on terrain chosen by the rulers.

When a baby wants to play with a hot fire place poker, you try to distract the baby with something a little safer, like a rattle. The right wing wants to spend the next four years going after abortion, gays and women. The fringe has an opportunity to distract them and force them to waste their energy instead of using their time effectively. So like the guerrillas in Iraq, who launched an uprising in Mosul while US forces invaded Falluja, as wingnuts we ought to be figuring out diversionary attacks that we can mount against religious fundamentalists, rather than spending the next four years in a defensive mode trying to preserve a mainstream status quo.

I've been trying to think of actions designed to be so outrageous that the right-wing would be forced to drop what they want to do to stop them. Even if such actions don't work as diversions, they can help keep the political field broad and let freaks everywhere know that we're not alone, and we're not going away!

But figuring out appropriate actions is hard when the stakes are high and your main strengths are humor and being a total freak — you don't want to just have a really outrageous Sodomy in the Streets (SITS) party while the US empire is shooting civilians in Iraq. My friend thinks we could disrupt reality by going around the country planting marijuana seedballs so pot would start growing everywhere like the weed it is. Cute idea, but let's be serious.

Another idea I had right after the election was to mount a campaign of Bible Burning. Remember a few years ago when the political establishment had to drop what it was doing to try to stop flag burning? For some reason this totally symbolic act by a tiny number of wingnuts drove the political establishment nuts. So I was thinking, if flag burning drives 'em crazy, how about Bible burning? But I think this is probably not a great tactic for a few reasons: it's scary and negative, evoking images of Nazi book burnings, it ignores the

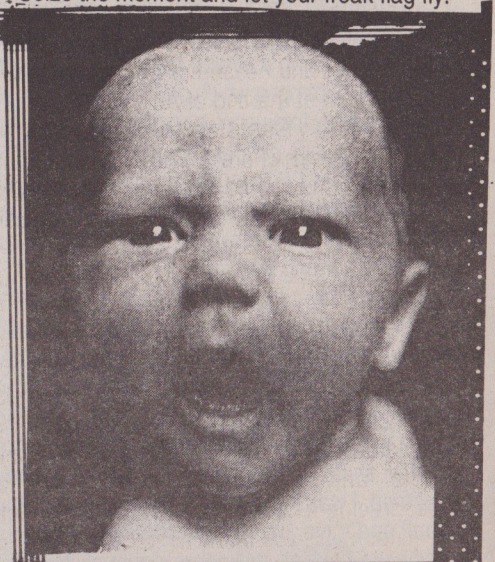
liberatory threads of some religious folks, and it only highlights what we're against, not what we can be for. I do like it because it could be an insane diversionary tactic — wouldn't it be great if church groups spent time banning bible burning instead of banning abortion? We need to be creative, but also be thoughtful and not allow our own fear and prejudices to lead us into our own intolerant actions. Intolerance is a far greater threat to the fringe than to the mainstream.

Because we're in the belly of the beast here in the USA, we have a crucial role — determination and even some discipline are in order. We have to use all means at hand in the struggle — a wide variety of tactics gives us the best chance to discover what will work.

After turning it over in my mind for the past few weeks, I have to admit that I have no idea what kind of actions we need to be up to, but I'm pretty sure we need to try some new things. The night after the election, the usual suspects gathered on Mission Street in San Francisco to protest, but this response seemed weak and somehow inappropriate. We shouldn't stop protesting and resisting, of course, but couldn't we be a little less ritualistic? If we have rallies and protests to lift our spirits, act in solidarity with peace and freedom loving people outside the USA, and

show that there are alternatives to the grim drumbeat of war and capitalism, that is great. But our protests need to serve our own purposes — traditional protests seem less relevant at the moment.

I think the best hope is for lots of people all over to think of some new ideas and try some freak experiments — and then report the results to everyone else. Decentralization and diversity are strengths in uncertain times. Seize the moment and let your freak flag fly!



putting the A in

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HUGE impact

For



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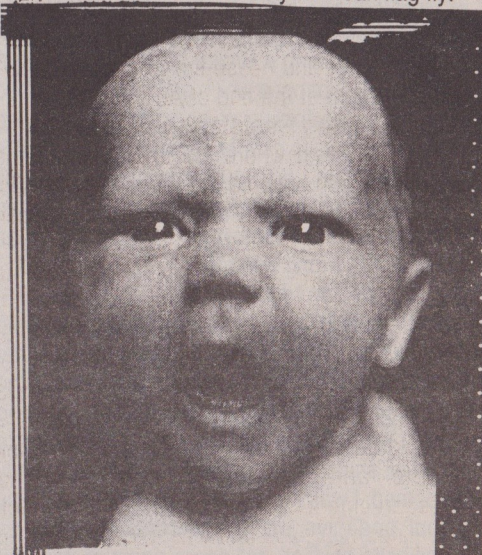
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## putting the A in Family

Continued from page 1

connected community of older (like, post-menopausal) radicals who can offer wisdom and tactics, as well as children with whom we practice our consensus and commitment to self-determination. Yes, radicals have kids and yes, radicals are grandparents but our movements are still youth centered. Communities of mature radicals won't intersect completely with communities of younger radicals—socially or politically—so we must find other ground to meet on. We can appreciate the experience and company of people at a different stage of life without needing to be the same. If we generally lack role models and youth we foster, how are we to improve our practice of anarchism with each generation?

The healthiest forms of non blood anarchist family I've seen are collective houses that intentionally interweave their lives. Besides having physical space to gather, houses have the informal contact that make intimacy

down. Families have stories of origin, and of the joys and sufferings shared, as well as a reason why they are unique and important. The stories may change, but they must be passed on.

The public debate on family doesn't address our need for support in the face of economic or emotional privation. When the religious right talk about "family values" and "preserving family," the overtones of sexism and heterosexism make debating that much more difficult. However, addressing the fears about love and support are simple. If a family is held together by patriarchy and guilt, it probably isn't satisfying to be a part of. We can never be obliged to love and we can never regulate true family. We will find a way to be ourselves within our blood families or we will find families that love us as we are or we will do both. Maybe so many people pass through radical scenes but settle for boring jobs and weekends mowing the lawn because there is no

a HUGE impact FOR ONLY 23¢

By lunAcy

I started writing to political prisoners after a former lover was sentenced to 6 months in Federal Prison; around that same time another dear friend of mine was given one year at a CA State Penitentiary. I began writing to them and received frequent (weekly and bi-weekly) return letters. I realized the things I mailed were greatly appreciated: letters, drawings, articles, etc.

The two friends I originally corresponded with are no longer in prison. Now our paper trail is slower but I recognize how important it was for me to write while they were completing their sentences. They were both treated poorly and put in "the hole", yet the letters still came, overflowing with flames of love and hope. Their writing always lead me to look at my personal gripes and how fucking petty I could be, and provided new and exciting perspectives, both personal and societal.

I feel a guttural puking response when I recall that people are rotting in cells, for any

for field hockey and football games.

My mom will retire in one year; she still will not talk about what goes on behind those walls. I know the prison environment has affected her. She was crushed in an electronic gate by accident and sexually harassed and intimidated by both prison guards and inmates. Yet she does things like planting a garden outside her work windows, bringing in fresh fruit and veggies, posting those sticky plastic pictures on her windows, and bringing other supplies that inmates don't have access to. She doesn't talk too much about these things that she does, but I see her do them.

This kindness came back to my mom. I got into a car accident and was badly injured. I was stuck in my car, waiting for the Jaws of Life and a helicopter to arrive. Many people came to the sight of the accident; I asked over and over, "will someone call my mother; her name is \_\_\_\_\_." One person called and found my mother; he was an ex-inmate who worked



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The healthiest forms of non blood anarchist family I've seen are collective houses that intentionally interweave their lives. Besides having physical space to gather, houses have the informal contact that make intimacy possible and support easier to ask for. It can be easier to break out of loneliness when you've only got to go downstairs to dinner.

Outside of houses, long-term collectives are the anarchist structure best suited to "family building." We had a big transformation last year at Slingshot, when we finally spent more time hanging out than working on the paper. When life's serious shit descended on several of us, it wasn't awkward to ask for support. In fact, it would have been awkward not to ask for support. That was when I knew that my family had grown.

By no means do anarchists have a monopoly on chosen families. Churches, unions and social clubs have taken the place of blood family, especially in the twentieth century. A family can be created by any group with affinity, given that it satisfies certain needs. First, people must be held together by a purpose. In blood families, it can be as simple as obligation, but it can be complex. People must have incentive to care for one another, and the care must be reciprocal. Often, we are cared for by family in our youth and then return that love later on when the people who foster us get older. There must also be space and time for regular intersection and a culture to hand

down. Families have stories of origin, and of the joys and sufferings shared, as well as a reason why they are unique and important. The stories may change, but they must be passed on.

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Let your redefinition of family be a step toward a more radical world. Invite fellow radicals closer, and share, in small ways at first, anarchism with your existing family. Think about what culture your families have given you and what you want to pass on. We need to hand different stories and values to the next generation, and first we must make them family.

I wanted to write about family because of my twelve cousins. We played and feasted together every Sunday until I was twelve. They taught me fun, cooperation, mischief, solidarity, and love. And though we now gather only once every few years, they are people who know me beneath the skin and love me still. It's never hard to come back together. I find relief knowing that they are in the world, and hopefully it is mutual.

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I feel a guttural puking response when I recall that people are rotting in cells, for any "crime," but I feel most for the comrades who are imprisoned because of their work to stop this fucking system of oppression. It breaks my heart every time I see a prison cell in a film or article, how small and inhumane the cells are. How quickly the context of living changes and how remarkable an effect a small postcard or letter will have.

After realizing the joy and necessity of letter writing I began to expand communication to other political prisoners who were listed with various support groups, such as the Earth Liberation Prisoners list and the Anarchist Black Cross Federation list (as well as other resources).

The ironic thing is that my mother works in a maximum-security state prison in upstate NY. My mother always said that the people in prison are, "Just the people who get caught... People who have no money or access to tricks in the legal system." My mother is apolitical; she to my knowledge has no regrets for working in the prison. It is less than .1-mile from my High School—very convenient for a single mom. She was able to get my sister and me health insurance, pay the bills and show up

for field hockey and football games.

My mom will retire in one year; she still will not talk about what goes on behind those walls. I know the prison environment has affected her. She was crushed in an electronic gate by accident and sexually harassed and intimidated by both prison guards and inmates. Yet she does things like planting a garden outside her work windows, bringing in fresh fruit and veggies, posting those sticky plastic pictures on her windows, and bringing other supplies that inmates don't have access to. She doesn't talk too much about these things that she does, but I see her do them.

This kindness came back to my mom. I got into a car accident and was badly injured. I was stuck in my car, waiting for the Jaws of Life and a helicopter to arrive. Many people came to the sight of the accident; I asked over and over, "will someone call my mother; her name is \_\_\_\_\_." One person called and found my mother; he was an ex-inmate who worked with my mom, and he wanted to repay the favor for her kindness.

Through letter writing and remembering people's stories and struggles, I can keep passing on the small drops of kindness just as I watched my mother find ways to bring love into a sexist, racist, classist system of oppression.

Alongside my political work, actions and personal education, I write letters. I write for all the times I was able to see a doctor because another person's family was broken and fatherless. And I write for all the good things: the explosions that made me smile, the state barricades crossed, the GMO crops destroyed, the animals rescued... and for the sake of crossing lines, building community, stopping imperialism and keeping my PO Box full.

I have never been behind bars for more than one day. The bars that surround me in this "free" world are closing in with each moment—so share yourself, share words as if it were a meal. Eat up each phrase and build this web that will abolish oppression. It takes only 37 cents for a letter and 23 cents for a postcard.



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fundamentalist cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's militia of poor urban youth. Shi'ite leaders, particularly the head cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, generally have not directly targeted the occupation. Al-Sadr did criticize the occupation and his group repeatedly has been targeted by US forces, starting with the closing of his newspaper and culminating in a violent fight and cease-fire in the Shi'ite holy city of Najaf at the end of August.

### Unifying the Resistance

In a context where the traditional internal divisions can only aid the US, several groups are working to unify the resistance. Muslim scholars emphasized avoiding sectarian conflict as they issued a fatwa (religious edict) November 20, calling resistance to occupation forces a religious duty for all Muslims. "Iraq today is targeted by a serious conspiracy that aims at destroying its social structure, even if it remains as one state. This would be by stirring up sectarian and ethnic strife and augmenting the points of disagreement. Religious and national duty requires that such differences be renounced. Everybody should be united to expel the occupation and build a unified Iraq for all its population," said the statement from the International Federation of Muslim Scholars. They condemned hostage-taking, attacks on media and humanitarian workers, and said prisoners of war should be treated well.

wide support not for his religious views per se, but because he has been repeatedly targeted by the US. The continual rampage by US troops appears to be pushing public opinion towards fundamentalism: February polls reported only 21% of Iraqis wanting an Islamic state, up to 70% by August. These polls didn't make the important distinction between a radical and a moderate Islamic state, but the trend is clear. According to Sheikh Khalisi, "Iraqis are looking for security, and can be seduced by hope. Extreme dictatorships are always formed in a context when nations seek stability. It happened when the shah took power in Iran, with Ataturk in Turkey, and Saddam Hussein here."

### Elections

Groups like the Iraq National Federation Congress would like the elections set [as of press date] for January 30 for 275 National Assembly members to focus on ending the occupation. Key players in the election span the country's religious and ethnic groups, and the potential for a representative democracy exists. But CIA tampering seems imminent. Ahmed Chelabi, the old Pentagon favorite, has been befriendng Shia power structures and

calling for a boycott of the elections, while an equally wide assortment of groups are running candidate lists. The US press says the boycott merely reflects minority Sunni fear that they will lose power to a Shia-dominated government — but boycotting groups say legitimate elections are impossible under US occupation. As of press date, it appears possible that elections will be postponed in the hope that security can be improved, although if the occupation continues, it is hard to see how that could happen. Two senior Sunni clerics were mysteriously assassinated in early November after their organization called for the boycott — an organization actually created by US-led forces after Saddam's ousting to fill an anticipated Sunni power vacuum, according to al-Jazeera.

The solution is extremely complicated. The US expects ethnic and religious groups with a centuries-old history of conflict to unite graciously and form a 'representative democracy' — with massive slaughter and carnage committed by US troops glowing rosily in the background. The US has created

clampdowns and defense spending. Crisis stimulates capital. But the truth is the US does not have enough troops to fight more than one major war at once. A draft is unlikely, imperial inclinations and rumors aside; the poverty draft is working well enough. An official draft would bring the war home to the middle classes, potentially sparking the kind of sixties-style anti-war movement that could stop the war.

What if there was armed resistance on US soil like that in Iraq? Iraqi people want an end to violence; many people there just want to get on with their lives with some degree of safety and stability. People in the US, particularly the middle and aspiring middle classes, have the ability to just get on with their lives, even as the government here creates a disastrous mess elsewhere. A recent CNN/USA Today poll reports almost half the people in the US think it was a mistake to send troops to Iraq. What are these 125 million people doing to stop the war?

Anti-war people can't be stymied by the gross destruction, or by the mind-boggling complexities of the occupation. We don't know how to stop the US government, but neither do they know what they're doing. They didn't plan the war well, and they don't know how to counter the strong and creative resistance in Iraq. Yet they plow ahead, dogmatically following capitalism's edict to build a puppet democracy on a foundation of dead Iraqi bodies.





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### Unifying the Resistance

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The widely-supported Iraq National Foundation Congress sponsors joint Sunni-Shia prayers, a key force in the 1920 revolution that ended colonial British rule. Established in July of this year, the group brings leftists, Kurds, and Christians together with pre-Saddam Ba'athists and members of powerful Sunni and Shia cleric associations. Although the Congress does not reject armed resistance, it advocates peaceful resistance instead of fundamentalist militias like Al-Sadr's. In an interview with *The Guardian* (UK), Congress spokesman Wamidh Nadhmi said the real division in Iraq is not between Arab and Kurd, Sunni and Shia, or secular and religious, but between "the pro-occupation camp and the anti-occupation camp. The pro-occupation people are either completely affiliated to the US and Britain, in effect puppets, or they saw no way to overthrow Saddam without occupation. Unfortunately, the pro-occupation people tend not to distinguish between resistance and terrorism, or between anti-occupation civil society and those who use violence." Sheik Jawad al-Khalisi, general secretary of the Congress, points out, "The media focus on violence, and the generally positive foreign coverage of the efforts of Ayad Allawi's new government "to defeat the insurgency," has created a false impression that the government's opponents use only force, and those who support peace

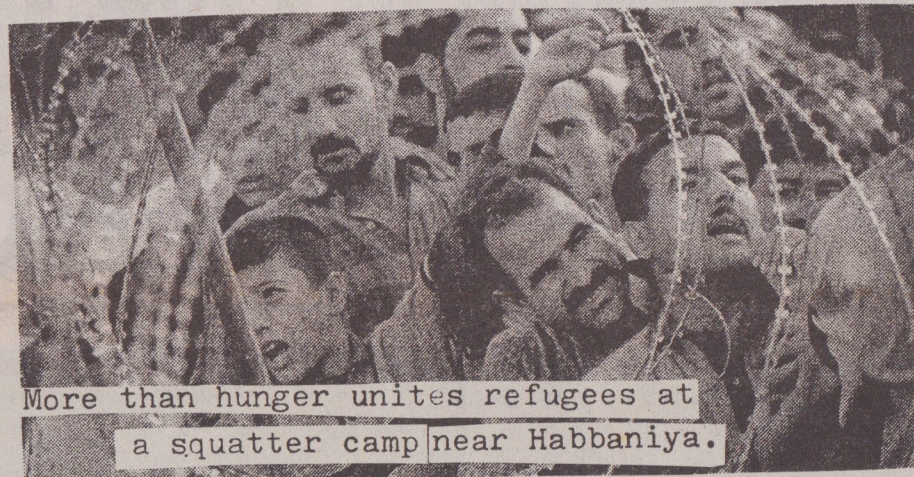
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may end up in the new government even though he is not respected by many Iraqis.

"Bush and Blair are terrified of the Iraqi people voting for anti-occupation leaders. They will accept nothing short of the legitimization, through sham elections supervised by the occupation authorities, of an Allawi-style puppet regime," writes Sami Ramandani. "How much more should the Iraqi people be subjected to for Bush and Blair to have their 'democratically' chosen puppets installed in Baghdad?"

A wide variety of Iraqi organizations are

a gaping wound in Iraq; continued foreign military presence can only exacerbate the situation. The United States should pull out immediately and let the Iraqis pick up the pieces from Saddam themselves.

Apparently the US enjoys staring down the throat of a fourth world war, as neocon Frank Gaffney, one of the Project for a New American Century crew, speculates grandly. Everytime Bush mentions bombing Iran, the prospect of regional war increases. The US government likes having a war on, because it's a grand excuse for all sorts of civil liberties

stop the war. What if there was armed resistance on US soil like that in Iraq? Iraqi people want an end to violence; many people there just want to get on with their lives with some degree of safety and stability. People in the US, particularly the middle and aspiring middle classes, have the ability to just get on with their lives, even as the government here creates a disastrous mess elsewhere. A recent CNN/USA Today poll reports almost half the people in the US think it was a mistake to send troops to Iraq. What are these 125 million people doing to stop the war?

Anti-war people can't be stymied by the gross destruction, or by the mind-boggling complexities of the occupation. We don't know how to stop the US government, but neither do they know what they're doing. They didn't plan the war well, and they don't know how to counter the strong and creative resistance in Iraq. Yet they plow ahead, dogmatically following capitalism's edict to build a puppet democracy on a foundation of dead Iraqi bodies. Unlike government bureaucrats, we don't have to numbly stumble along in our daily lives, because we have a million people and therefore a million ways to resist the war. Just like there's not one group masterminding the resistance in Iraq, there's not a blueprint for the anti-war movement here at home, so we should stop looking for it and follow our own hearts and minds. If we turn up the volume, doing all we can to stop the occupation within the context of our daily lives, the resistance here will be so varied and unpredictable that it will be the definition of political instability.

Ultimately, the US can bomb the shit out of Iraq only as long as troops there cooperate and things remain stabilized — paralyzed — stateside. The troops are voting with their feet; of 4,000 reservists recently called to serve, 1,800 filed lawsuits against the military, and 700 simply didn't show up. A National Guard unit recently refused its mission. When will we wake up here at home?

The

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# action calendar

## December

### December 28-January 2

Retreat with the Buddhist Peace Fellowship in Soquel California (near Santa Cruz) Any 14 - 19 year old who is interested in spirituality and activism. [www.bpf.org/teenretreat.html](http://www.bpf.org/teenretreat.html). Contact Sara S 510-594-7648

### December 31

New Year's Eve San Francisco Critical Mass Bike Ride. 6 p.m. at Justin Herman Plaza, Market & Embarcadero.

## January 2005

### January 9 • 1 p.m.

Slingshot new volunteer meeting - get involved in creating this paper. 3124 Shattuck Ave in Berkeley.

### January 15-20

Protest Bush's Inauguration. Week of action to protest war, social injustice culminating with action at Bush's coronation on Jan. 20. Washington, DC [www.counter-inaugural.org](http://www.counter-inaugural.org)

### January 29 • 3 p.m.

Deadline for Slingshot issue #85.

## February

### February 3-6

The 8th annual National Conference on Organized Resistance (NCOR) Washington, DC. [www.organizedresistance.org](http://www.organizedresistance.org)

### February 5-6

Demand Liberation: Regional Student Animal Rights Action Conference. Gainesville, Florida. Register in advance - \$10 [www.defendanimals.org](http://www.defendanimals.org) Also in Austin, Texas Feb 12-13 and Minneapolis Feb 19-20.

### February 7-12

2005 DIY Convention: Do It Yourself in Film, Music & Books. Los Angeles. Screenings, music showcases, panels, photography contest and workshops. [www.diyconvention.com](http://www.diyconvention.com)

### February 8

Berkeley Mardi Gras parade. Starts at sunrise, but you can find them at Food Not Bombs at People's Park (Haste / Telegraph) at around 3 p.m. for a parade to the Farmers Market.

### February 16 - 23

Queeruption 7! Radical queer DIY gathering. Sydney, Australia. [www.queeruption.org](http://www.queeruption.org)

## March

### March 5

Going Public: Radical Resistance in Education. Miami University, Oxford, OH. [reesr@muohio.edu](mailto:reesr@muohio.edu)

### March 11 • 8 pm

Slingshot newspaper's 17th birthday party. Food, fun, dancing after Berkeley Critical Mass bike ride (which starts at 6 pm at Berkeley BART). Free. 3124 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley.

### March 19-20

Global Day of Coordinated Actions on the 2nd Anniversary of the "Shock and Awe" Invasion of Iraq. Mass demonstrations in Washington DC, San Francisco, Los Angeles and other cities.

### March 26 • 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

San Francisco Anarchist Book Fair. County Fair Building, 9th and Lincoln in Golden Gate Park. Free.

### March 27 • 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Bay Area Anarchist Conference sponsored by Bay Area Students Toward Anarchist Research and Development (BASTARD). Location TBA.

## & On...

### May 7 - 9

Madison, Wisconsin Anarchist Bookfair. [circle\\_a\\_books@riseup.net](mailto:circle_a_books@riseup.net), 608-262-9036

### May 15

Montreal Anarchist Bookfair. 514 859-9090 [anarchistbookfair@taktic.org](mailto:anarchistbookfair@taktic.org)

### May 30 - June 6

Queeruption 8! Radical queer DIY gathering. Barcelona, Spain. [www.queeruption.org](http://www.queeruption.org)

### July 6

Global Day of Action to protest the opening day of the 2005 G8 Summit in Gleneagles, Perthshire, United Kingdom (Scotland, around 40 miles/70 km from Edinburgh). They are calling on folks to help disrupt the Summit, and for people to organize and take part in simultaneous actions in villages, towns and cities around the world. [www.dissent.org.uk](http://www.dissent.org.uk), [www.agp.org](http://www.agp.org) or [infog82005@yahoo.com](mailto:infog82005@yahoo.com)

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